NICHOLAS LEMANN: BILL BENNETT'S OUTRAGE

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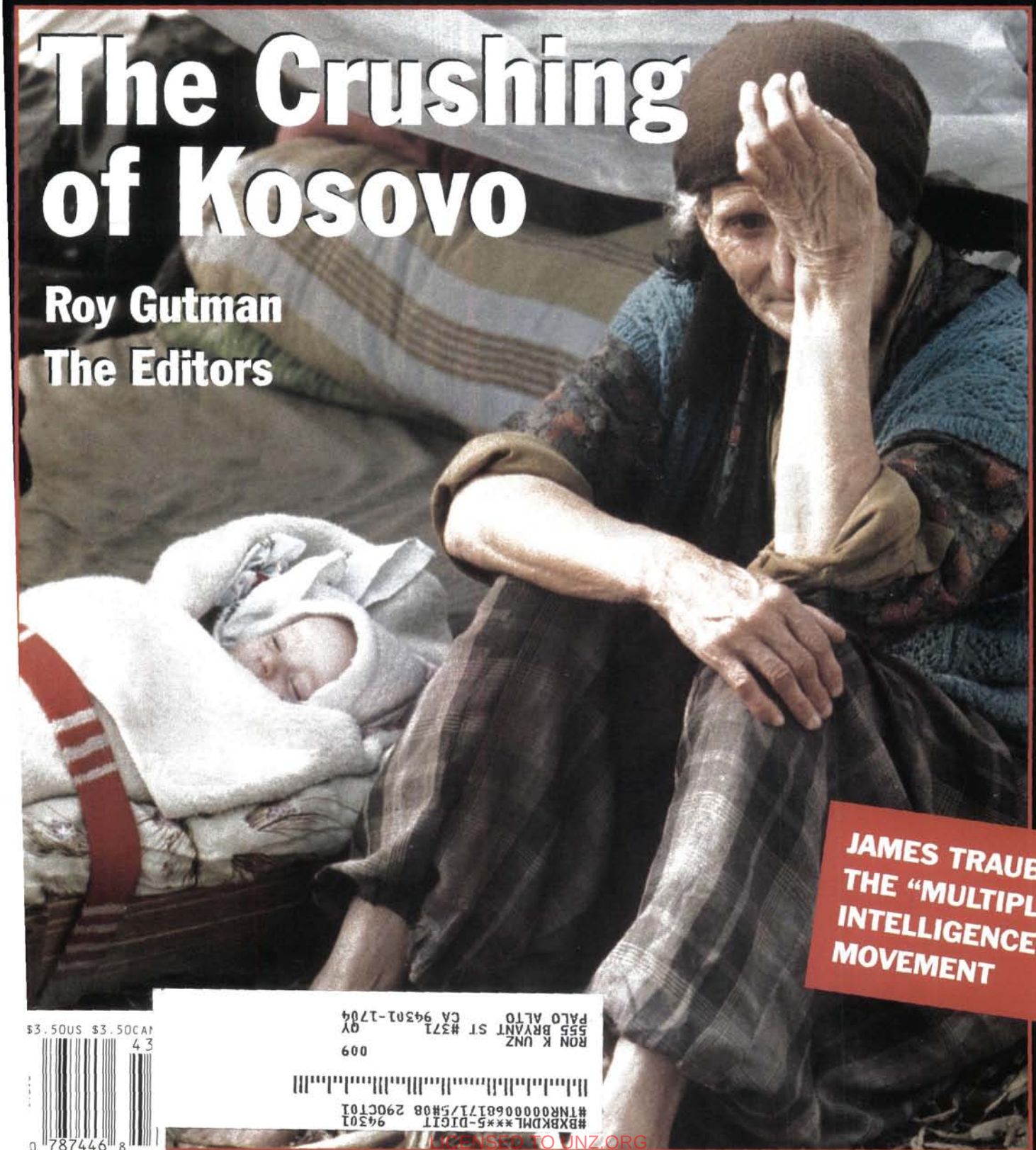

The Crushing of Kosovo

Roy Gutman

The Editors

JAMES TRAUB: THE "MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCE" MOVEMENT

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Where We Stand

A commentary on public education and other critical issues

Two Million Teachers

By SANDRA FELDMAN, President
American Federation of Teachers

A spotlight has been turned on teachers this school year, illuminating some dark corners of the world in which they work—inadequate pay, little professional support, difficult working conditions. It's also caused a sudden flurry of concern: Over the next ten years, we will need to hire 2.2 million new teachers. Where will we find them?

With serious shortages already hitting many districts—especially those where the need for good teachers is greatest and the pay and conditions are the worst—some boards of education have come up with the bright idea of offering signing bonuses to attract new teachers. Hey, if it works for sports stars and CEOs, why not?

Baltimore's lure was $5,000 towards a house closing (for new teachers willing to live in the city), plus $1,200 in moving expenses. Detroit offered $3,000 just for signing on the dotted line. The Massachusetts incentive, far and away the most generous of any I saw, put up $20,000 over four years for 100 of the top candidates.

Easy Come, Easy Go

Though surely this is an idea worth trying, there is a little problem. What will keep these teachers from quitting when the bonus is spent if salaries remain low and working conditions don't change? Right now, the attrition rate is 22 percent overall in the first three years and nearly 50 percent for teachers in urban schools. Women, the majority of teachers for years, now have many more options than they did a generation ago. Other professions more attractive to young talent are wide open; and the wage differentials are painfully obvious.

Teachers' salaries have risen in recent years, thanks to the efforts of teacher unions. But they haven't risen as far or as fast as they need to do in order to make teaching competitive with other fields. Other countries manage to pay teachers wages that reflect the important job they do—in Japan, for example, teachers are the highest paid civil servants. The relatively low pay of U.S. teachers is an embarrassing but accurate reflection of our society's priorities and our shameful neglect of children, especially our poor children.

Salaries, as any teacher will tell you, are not the main problem.

And salaries, as any teacher will tell you, are not the main problem. There are all the small things—and big ones—that make the job tough. Not having enough materials and books and supplies, for example. Teachers often spend hundreds of dollars of their own money to make sure their students have what they need.

We talk a lot about computers, about the sophisticated and powerful technology that links us to the remotest parts of the globe. Yet most teachers, if they want to call a parent about how her kid is doing in math, have to go down the hall and wait in line for a telephone.

I've been in countless classrooms where I've asked youngsters how many would like to be teachers. Sometimes not a single hand goes up. Do we think bright college students aren't put off by the teacher-bashing they hear and see in the media? Do we think they haven't noticed for themselves the working conditions their teachers had to put up with—and the often lousy pay?

In a Bind

Young people who want to teach want to help children. They want to do meaningful work, to make a difference. They also want to support families and feel successful.

The school districts offering the incentives are on to something. If you want to get the best, you need to make it worth their while. Otherwise someone else—some other school district (or some other profession)—will grab them. But it's foolish to think that *attracting* talent is enough. What kind of baseball team would hand out signing bonuses and expect to win championships if its players had to work for less money than those on other teams and play on poorly maintained fields with outmoded equipment? No one would try this in baseball. Why should we think it will work in schools? ▮

Where We Stand **is published once every month in *The New Republic*. To comment, write to Sandra Feldman, AFT, 555 New Jersey Ave. N.W., Washington, DC 20001.** **© Sandra Feldman 1998.** **Visit our web site (http://www.aft.org).**

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Photograph of Albanian refugee and sleeping grandchild at a camp in Terdevec, 15 miles from Pristina, © AP/Wide World Photos. Articles on pages 7 and 15.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Terrorizing the terrorists

To the editors:

You make a cogent argument in favor of legalizing U.S.-sponsored assassination to counter the threat of terrorism ("Get Personal," September 14 & 21). Terrorists who have acted should face death, but not by executive sanction alone. They should be tried by the judicial branch, convicted beyond a reasonable doubt, sentenced to death, and then executed (wherever they may be found). Or, depending on the circumstances of the terrorist act, the legislative branch should issue a formal declaration of war, thus making the terrorists "fair game" for our military forces. Not only are American lives at stake here, but also American legitimacy.

CHRISTOPHER J. MATTIA
West Bloomfield, Michigan

Easy access

To the editors:

Ronald Steel suggests that U.S. citizenship is now almost as easy to obtain as catalog merchandise ("Who Is Us?" September 14 & 21). In fact, laws governing eligibility to apply for naturalization have not changed significantly in several years. Furthermore, applications are now scrutinized much more thoroughly than was recently the case, and adjudication of applications routinely takes one to two years, much longer than in the recent past.

CHUCK PEROV
Seattle, Washington

To the editors:

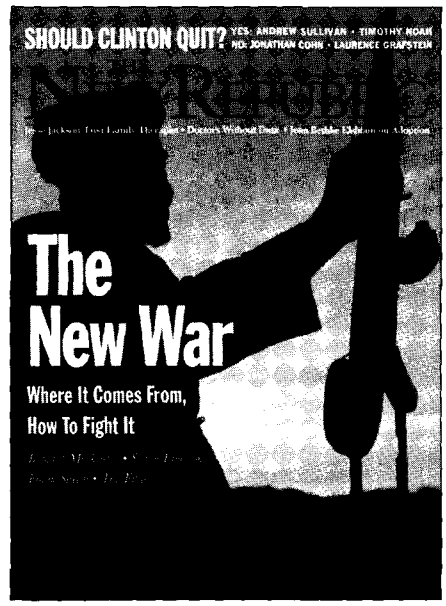
Nearly every wave of immigrants to the United States has encountered the same concerns Ronald Steel levels about today's immigrants: that they are too attached to their homelands, will not become sufficiently Americanized, and will somehow, as he states, "undermine the bedrock of national cohesion and identity." What's remarkable about these predictions and the many others like them throughout American history is how wrong they turned out to be. Wrong not only because in virtually every case immigrant groups and their successive generations largely adapted to—assimilated, if you prefer—American culture. But wrong also because American culture is one of the few in the world with the capacity to absorb new cultural influences (if it doesn't overwhelm them altogether) and evolve with them without altering its fundamental contours.

JEFFREY WEINTRAUB
Director
American Jewish Committee's
Center for American Pluralism
Washington, D.C.

Adoption politics

To the editors:

I wish to correct several incorrect impressions that readers may have gotten from Jean Bethke Elshtain's recent essay on adoption ("The Chosen Family," September 14 & 21). Elshtain writes that "lessening the trauma" of telling children that they were adopted "fueled the


SHOULD CLINTON QUIT?
YES: ANDREW SULLIVAN • TIMOTHY NOAH
NO: JONATHAN COHN • LAURENCE GRAFSTEIN
The New War
Where It Comes From, How To Fight It

quest for greater secrecy," but this is inaccurate. In fact, as I relate at some length in my book, *Family Matters: Secrecy and Disclosure in the History of Adoption*, secrecy evolved not from a desire to lessen the trauma of telling but from a number of disparate and complex forces including a demographic shift in the age of unwed mothers and their desire for secrecy; social-worker professionalism; the desire to protect the adoption process itself; and the influence of psychoanalytic theory on the social-welfare profession, to name but a few. Elshtain also writes that I refer to biological mothers as the "real" mothers, in contrast to adoptive mothers. But nowhere in *Family Matters* do I use the term "real mothers" to suggest that they are superior to adoptive ones.

E. WAYNE CARP
Tacoma, Washington

To the editors:

As two adoption professionals attacked by Jean Bethke Elshtain, we would like to clarify our point of view. Elshtain accuses us of labeling and maligning adoptive parents as "bad guys who won't let the sun shine in; adoptees are their victims." On the contrary, we have worked hard for the benefit of adoptive parents hampered by incomplete information about their adopted child's family history. We are concerned about the development of adopted persons and are working to identify and reform areas in need of change, but we are undeserving of the association with those who insist on "the fragile mental health of adoptees."

Elshtain depicts the Adoption Reform Movement as anti-adoption. In fact, ARM is interested in increasing the number of adoptions, both in the case of newborns as well as for the nearly one million children currently under foster care. ARM also recognizes the interrelationship of birth parents, adoptive parents, and children, and the movement seeks to meet the needs of all. While the safety and security of the child must come first, family continuity and connection remains a primary goal in advancing the welfare of adopted children.

ANNETTE BARAN
REUBEN PANNOR
Los Angeles, California

To the editors:

Jean Bethke Elshtain's essay reminds us of the hidden reservoirs of emotion and bias that can overtake anyone who wanders into the seemingly benign adoption field, even seemingly objective academics. She uses E. Wayne Carp's deeply flawed book *Family Matters* as a road map and jumping-off point for her own romantic convictions about the superiority of nurture over nature, while she questions the "good standing" of the adoption rights movement in "American identity politics." She also misrepresents the ideas of Katarina Wegar, a Finnish adoptee and sociologist, who is sympathetic to the goals of this movement.

As an author on the psychology of the adopted and an adoption counselor, I can attest that adoption rights advocates are not "anti-adoption" but anti-closed adoption. Nor do they insist on the "superiority of blood" over adoptive ties. And the "new psychology of the adopted" described by Elshtain actually stretches back to the early 1940s, when Florence Clothier, a Boston psychiatrist, described the identity confusion of adopted children who had "lost the thread of family continuity." Since the 1960s, American and European therapists have reported a disproportionate number of young adoptees in their practice and in residential treatment centers. To have empathy for the psychological stress of the adopted in the closed adoption system is not to pathologize them.

Elshtain joins Carp in distorting the

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work of child psychiatrist Arthur Sorosky and clinical social workers Annette Baran and Reuben Pannor. Any knowledgeable reader of their work will recognize that it is intellectually sound, morally concerned, and responsible for helping to open adoption practice.

BETTY JEAN LIFTON, PH.D.
South Wellfleet, Massachusetts

Jean Bethke Elshtain replies:

Professor Carp's book contains many rhetorical shifts that thrust adoptive parents into secondary status while granting biology preemptory claims. Following Carp, I note the controversy surrounding the work of Baran and Pannor, specifically their dubious proposition that adoptees are uniquely vulnerable psychologically and account for a vastly disproportionate number of adolescent psychiatric admissions. In answer to Betty Jean Lifton, nowhere do I suggest that the adoption field is benign; on the contrary, my response notes the very deep and troubling questions it raises. I insist it is off-base to pathologize adoption or cast the desire to know one's biological origins as part of a romantic "search." I do not argue that the old regime of secrecy should be reinstated. I am simply wary of claims that "openness" can solve all our problems, whether in adoption, politics, or anything else.

Fundamentals of Islam

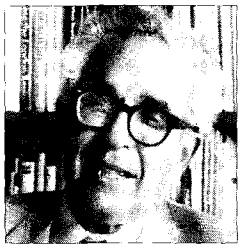
To the editors:

Steven Emerson claims that "unlike Christianity and Judaism, Islam has yet to undergo a reformation or enlightenment—and that allows some clerics to claim religious justification for violence" ("Unholy War," September 14 & 21). He argues that Islamic fundamentalists draw on doctrine "from an earlier historical era," as if it was modernity that rescued traditional religion from fanaticism and violence. But the encounter between traditional Judaism and the Enlightenment produced a liberal form of Judaism that repudiated some of rabbinic Judaism's basic assumptions, which in turn created a right-wing movement that is narrower and less tolerant than Judaism had historically been. Similarly, the emergence of radical Islam is a reaction to a secular Western culture that is perceived as a grave threat—a contemporary response to a contemporary challenge.

Emerson mistakenly treats the notion of "holy war" as a singularly sinister doctrine of Islam. But to Muslims the concept is no different from the Jewish or Christian notions of a justifiable or righteous war.

BOB GOLDFARB
New York, New York

"Nathan Glazer...understands the present situation...clearly, and with an admirable sensitivity to what certain multiculturalists are trying to achieve...As Mr. Glazer shows in a fascinating chapter, the educational theorists (including John Dewey) who spoke of the American 'melting pot' were thinking almost exclusively of the European immigrants to this country; race, in their vocabulary, meant what we now call ethnicity. European-Americans could and would in time disconnect themselves from their country of origin and cease to be known as 'hyphenated' Americans. African-Americans were never included in this vision and were often treated by the theorists as if they simply were not there."
—Mary Lefkowitz, WALL STREET JOURNAL



We Are All Multiculturalists Now

NATHAN GLAZER

"Glazer...is a distinguished social scientist and social critic...[This is a] densely packed book, the essential argument of which is that multiculturalism 'is the price America is paying for its inability or unwillingness to incorporate into its society African Americans, in the same way and to the same degree it has incorporated so many groups.'"
—Jonathan Yardley, WASHINGTON POST BOOK WORLD

"This book is remarkable for the plainspoken grace of its concessions, and Glazer also maintains an eloquent honesty about his reservations regarding government-imposed remedies, and about his unaccustomed position of being stymied for answers."
—KIRKUS REVIEWS

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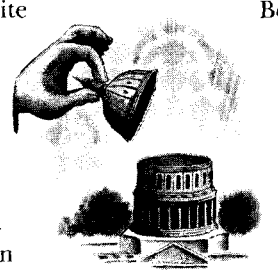
FROM WASHINGTON

Casualty attitude

We now have a definitive answer to one of contemporary history's most maddening puzzles. Why, with Kuwait already liberated and Saddam Hussein's forces on the run, did George Bush balk at sending American troops on to Baghdad? A major factor, as Bush himself told David Frost in a fascinating but underreported interview that aired on the Arts & Entertainment network on August 25 (and will air again on October 17), was the fear of American casualties. "[W]ho the hell was I to say, 'Hey, general, your mission has changed,' " Bush recalled. "And he would have said to me, 'Well, sir, whose daughter, whose son of what American are you going to ask to give up their life—in a perhaps fruitless hunt in the most secure environment for a dictator in the world—to try to find this guy and get him out?' "

This history is worth reviewing today, not only because we are still wrestling with the consequences of Bush's failure to oust Saddam but also because we are now pondering the use of force in another place—the Balkans—and the Bush mentality remains alive and well. Indeed, for Bill Clinton, the prospect of using force triggers exquisite fretting about causing death and injury, not just to American soldiers, but to non-Americans, too.



Consider: Shortly after Clinton sent his weapons of choice—pilotless cruise missiles—to destroy a suspected nerve-gas plant in Sudan, he told a church group in Martha's Vineyard: "I was here on this island up till two-thirty in the morning trying to make absolutely sure that at that chemical plant there was no night shift.... I didn't want some person who was a nobody to me, but who may have a family to feed and a life to live and probably had no earthly idea what else was going on there, to die needlessly." (Am I the only one who noticed this soliloquy's uncanny similarity to one delivered by President Andrew Shepherd in *The American President*, the Michael Douglas film in which a good-guy Democratic president has qualms about firing back at Libyan intelligence headquarters, where some anonymous family man who works as a janitor on the night shift might get killed?)

Of course, this attitude reflects the legacy of such events as Vietnam and the 1983 slaughter of Marines in Beirut. And, as Edward Luttwak has speculated, modern democracies may simply be even more averse to casualties than past societies because families are much smaller and parents—i.e., voters—are that much more reluctant to hand over their kids to the military. Whatever its origin, our leaders' extraordinary sensitivity about casualties is, in one sense, utterly admirable. At the end of a century in which so many governments have cavalierly wasted their citizens' lives in pointless or evil wars, it speaks well of American democracy that it should be so strict about human lives in what have generally been justifiable crusades.

So what's the problem? The first one has to do with civil-military relations. Reacting to the corrupt "attrition" strategy of Vietnam, our generals have learned to resist bad ideas from civilians that might get their soldiers killed. But not every proposed attack is another Vietnam. Thus, when civilian leaders get into the habit of deferring to (often exaggerated) military forecasts of casualties, they implicitly abdicate constitutional authority. "Who was" George Bush to tell Norman Schwarzkopf to go to Baghdad? Oh, nobody special. Just the constitutionally authorized commander-in-chief. If Bush had told Schwarzkopf to personally lead the assault on Saddam's palace, Schwarzkopf would have had to salute and obey, or resign. And remember: Bush made his decision *after* the campaign for Kuwait had been won with only 148 Americans killed, not thousands of killed and wounded, as projected by the Pentagon.

The second problem is that America's now well-advertised aversion to casualties undercuts our foreign policy. Right now, we are using the threat of force to persuade Slobodan Milosevic, the Serbian nationalist president of Yugoslavia, to end his campaign against Kosovo. But Milosevic knows up front that the casualty-shy United States will only hit him with air power—perhaps in the

continued on page 41

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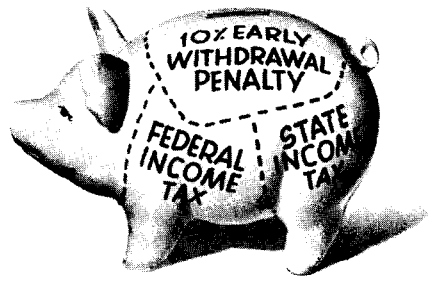

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

OCTOBER 26, 1998

THE VILLAIN

It is obscene not only that we have been here before, but also that we have been here before so recently. The corpses in the Balkans are piling high again. To be sure, there are significant differences between the perplexity of Bosnia and the perplexity of Kosovo, but there is also a significant similarity: in both wretched places, Slobodan Milosevic unleashed a violent campaign of terror against an ethnicity that represents a challenge to the legitimacy of his rule and its fascist, racialist foundations. The systematic murder and expulsion in Kosovo in recent weeks has established once and for all what the systematic murder and expulsion in Bosnia should have established once and for all: the monsters of Europe in the 1930s have found an heir in Europe in the 1990s, and he lives in Belgrade.

Once again it took a particular bloodbath to concentrate the minds of Washington, New York, and Brussels on the policies of the duce of Serbia. On September 26, 18 members of the Deliaj clan in the village of Gornji Obrinje, the young and the old, ethnic Albanians all, were shot to death, burned to death, or knifed to death two days after the village was besieged by counter-insurgency units of the Yugoslav army and the Serbian police. In all, 21 people died in that massacre, and 13 ethnic Albanians were killed in another massacre in the village of Golubovac four miles away. The terror in Kosovo was on the evening news and the front page, and there was talk of a military response by NATO.

Richard Holbrooke was dispatched to Belgrade to warn Milosevic that the situation was becoming increasingly unacceptable: the continued killings, the quarter of a million Kosovar refugees, 50,000 of them trapped in the countryside with winter coming quickly. Holbrooke demanded that Milosevic pull his troops out of Kosovo and consider seriously a plan for the gradual attainment of Kosovar autonomy that has been hatched in the State Department.

But the American emissary candidly reported that it was "not a good meeting"; and no sooner had the meeting ended than Milosevic rushed onto Serbian television to denounce Holbrooke's threat of Western military action as "a criminal act." The Holbrooke mission was also somewhat vitiated by the comments of unnamed "American diplomats" that it was "not a do-or-die trip." In Washington, the Pentagon resumed its traditional role of inhibiting the willingness to use force, and a lame president lamely pronounced that "the time is now to end the violence in Kosovo." Meanwhile, our cherished allies the Russians did what they always seem to be doing: they confounded American foreign policy by using their Security Council seat to head off a United Nations mandate for military action.

So it looks like the massacre at Gornji Obrinje is not quite a Srebrenican event; but then there were many Srebrenicas in Bosnia before the Srebrenica that finally brought NATO planes into the skies above the killing fields. A number of alibis for inaction are making the rounds. It is said, not least by Milosevic himself, that violence begets violence, that the present horrors in Kosovo were provoked by the Kosovo Liberation Army. But does anyone doubt the strategic utility of the Kosovar radicals for Milosevic? The KLA has done nothing but play into Belgrade's hands. It has allowed Milosevic to hide his designs against Albanians behind his designs against "Albanian terrorists." It is also said, in a similar tone of accommodation to Belgrade, that the independence of Kosovo is a "non-starter." It is certainly the case that Kosovar independence would create problems for the other polities in the region with Albanian populations, and in the north Republika Srpska might well seize the opportunity to declare its own independence and thereby put an end to the Dayton experiment in Bosnia. Yet it is Milosevic's consistent policy of launching one ethnic war after another that is conferring credibility upon the Kosovar desire to live beyond his sway. And surely there are things worse than the dismemberment of Yugoslavia,

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such as the massacre of women and children. Lives are more sacred than borders.

NATO should punish Milosevic with force for his punishment of innocents with force; but NATO likely will not do so, at least not for now. Still, there is another objective to which the United States can commit itself, an objective that may be accomplished without the assistance of bombs and cruise missiles. Call it political development in Yugoslavia. The sickening experience of the Balkans in this decade has been substantially the work of Slobodan Milosevic, and one way to bring that experience to an end is to remove him from power. This one evil man has been the cause of incalculable suffering. He must go; it is a moral and practical imperative. This week, Congress will pass a bill that makes $100 million available for the Clinton administration to support the opposition to Saddam Hussein. Call it political development in Iraq. It is an apposite model.

Slobodan Milosevic believes that the West is conspiring against him. We should furnish his fantasy with a basis in reality. •

NOTEBOOK

AMERIKA: Amnesty International has produced its judgment of the United States in a preposterous 150-page report on human rights violations here. Larded with legal footnotes and quotations from prisoners and lawyers, the report excoriates the United States for failing to live up to its own democratic ideals: "Across the country, thousands of people are subjected to sustained and deliberate brutality at the hands of police officers. Cruel, degrading, and sometimes life-threatening methods of restraint continue to be a feature of the U.S. criminal justice system." Well, yes, but it is not a denial of the imperfections of American society to insist that such a discussion of the United States makes a mockery of the humanitarian analysis that Amnesty so fiercely champions. The United States does not have a perfect record on the treatment of prisoners. But is it a matter of official and systematic American policy, as the Amnesty report suggests, to mistreat them? And, if it is not, then in what meaningful sense can the United States be treated in the same moral and political categories as, say, Syria or Guatemala? (It is almost beneath our dignity to point out, in this addled context, that in recent decades the rights of criminals have been steadily expanded by the Supreme Court.) What really has Amnesty exercised is, of course, the death penalty in America. This magazine has never been in favor of the death penalty, but to represent it as a human rights violation trivializes the very real moral issues involved in discussing this grim act of governmental violence. The Amnesty report huffs and puffs about the use of the death penalty, which is "often enacted in vengeance, applied in an arbitrary manner, subject to bias because of the defendant's race or economic status, or driven by the political ambitions of those who oppose it." This is merely the agitprop of a special interest, and the argument about racial disparities is a little beside the point, since it remains, alas, true that a disproportionate number of violent crimes are committed by black Americans. This scurrilous document is the accomplishment of Pierre Sané, a development expert from Senegal who is secretary general of Amnesty. Sané actually believes that "the international community, in terms of standards, is moving really ahead of the standards obtain[ed] in the United States today." Such a judgment represents not so much a political failure as a cognitive failure. The man has eyes but does not see. For the real world is not divided between just societies and unjust societies. It is divided between more just societies and less just societies. Some of the less just societies are sheer nightmares, and the United States is, by any rational measure of justice, one of the more just societies. A view of the world that cannot take these essential distinctions into account is not a view of the world that should command any respect.

HEADLINES IN COMBAT:

U.S. Troops May Be Sent to Kosovo, Cohen Says

—*Los Angeles Times*, October 7.

Cohen against sending troops

—*The Washington Times*, same day.

WHAT DOES THAT SAY ABOUT JOHN ELWAY?: "I felt he was very personable, very sensitive.... By and large, he has the most strength and character of any individual in the professional athletes' department that I've worked with."—social worker and sports psychologist Larry Curry, testifying before the Nevada State Athletic Commission on the fitness of suspended boxer Mike Tyson to compete again, as reported in *USA Today*. Curry's clients include the Denver Broncos football team.

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BURSTING WITH PRIDE DEPARTMENT: The Kaddish is the unavoidable prayer of Jewish life. It consoles the bereaved, and it expresses the fidelity of the living to the dead. More than that: In a highly secular world, it lures the nonbeliever into the community and the history of the faith. And, to the ears of non-Jews (and to their hearts), the prayer is no less haunting. Why does this near-ancient threnody have this power? To the subject of the Kaddish, Leon Wieseltier has now brought his philosophical and personal meditations, called simply *Kaddish*, which has just been published by Knopf. The extent to which our literary editor is deeply learned and deeply literate does not, by now, surprise anybody. Still, when one reads nearly 600 pages of beautiful and rigorous writing steeped in such thick and vivid knowledge, it is hard not to come away a little breathless. The book has been out barely two weeks, and the reviews are rapturous: *Kaddish* is already an event. Not an event that will be forgotten next month, but an event that recurs as long as men and women will be interested in the difficult and traditional answers to the most vexing human questions. •

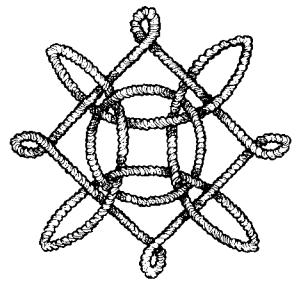
THE HARD QUESTIONS

WATERGATE BABY

By Michael J. Sandel

I, too, was once a 21-year-old Washington intern. Between my junior and senior years of college, I worked as a reporter in the Washington bureau of the *Houston Chronicle*. It was the summer of 1974, and the House Judiciary Committee was considering the impeachment of Richard Nixon.

"Let others wallow in Watergate," Nixon once said. I was a happy wallower. On July 8, I sat in the Supreme Court chamber, listening to Leon Jaworski, the special prosecutor, and James St. Clair, the president's lawyer, debate whether Nixon should be compelled to turn over his tapes. (I actually heard only half of the oral argument. So intense was the crush of press coverage that most newspaper reporters had to share a seat in the Court chamber, rotating in and out every half-hour.)



A few days later, the House Judiciary Committee released volumes of evidence prepared by its staff. Unlike the "document dumps" of today, which appear instantly on the Web, the volumes were often given out at the Capitol in the evening, embargoed for release the following morning. I volunteered to pick up the copies designated for our paper, lugged them to my apartment behind Capitol Hill, and read late into the night, culling the massive tomes for new revelations. When the summer ended, I was allowed to keep one of our bureau's sets as a bulky souvenir.

The recent impeachment stirrings prompted me to pull the beige-covered volumes down from the shelf. Read in the light of the Starr report, the 1974 committee's "Statement of Information" is striking for its restraint. It consists solely of facts and supporting documents, without argument or conclusions. It also includes a parallel set of volumes, prepared by Nixon's lawyers and published by the committee, emphasizing evidence more favorable to the president.

Despite some surface similarities, the impeachment hearings I witnessed that summer differed in several ways from those now unfolding in Washington. Then, as now, the majority party in Congress was investigating a president of the opposing party serving his second term. The party balance on the committees was roughly the same—a 21–17 Democratic majority in Committee Chair Peter Rodino's day, a 21–16 Republican majority in Henry Hyde's. Rodino's inquiry, like the one House Republicans now propose, was not limited by time or subject matter. Almost six months passed from the authorization of the inquiry to the final vote. In the end, Rodino was able to secure a bipartisan majority for impeachment—and, with it, a national consensus.

Hyde's committee will not likely achieve either, for three reasons. The first has to do with changes in the Congress. Many have observed that the House today, and especially the Judiciary Committee, are more bitterly partisan than they were a quarter-century ago. To some extent, the comparison is clouded by nostalgia. The Nixon impeachment hearings were not devoid of partisan passions. Twelve of the Democrats on the committee, including Robert Drinan of Massachusetts, Charles Rangel and Elizabeth Holtzman of New York, and John Conyers Jr. of Michigan (who is now the committee's senior minority member), voted to impeach Nixon for his secret bombing of Cambodia. (The article failed.) On the GOP side, Charles Wiggins, who represented Nixon's former district in California, and Charles Sandman Jr., a combative New Jersey Republican, vigorously defended their president to the bitter end. Then, as now, the minority complained about leaks and unfair treatment.

Still, the climate was less contentious. Party and ideology were less clearly aligned than they are today. Of the 21 Democrats on Rodino's committee, three were conservative Southern Democrats. Walter Flowers (Alabama), James Mann (South Carolina), and Ray Thornton (Arkansas) all came from districts that had voted heavily for Nixon in 1972, and their votes were in doubt until late in the proceedings. The Republican ranks included Northern moderates such as William

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Cohen of Maine (now secretary of defense), Hamilton Fish Jr. of New York, and Tom Railsback of Illinois. The Southern Democrats and moderate Republicans met frequently, softening the partisan edge of the proceedings. In the end, all Democrats and seven Republicans voted to recommend impeachment.

The second big difference is in the nature of the presidential misdeeds. Nixon's offenses—the cover-up of the Watergate burglary (Article of Impeachment I) and the use of the FBI, CIA, and IRS against political enemies (Article of Impeachment II)—were classic examples of the "serious offenses against the system of government" that, as the committee rightly argued, impeachment is designed to remedy. When Nixon released the "smoking gun" tape shortly after the committee's votes, proving his involvement in the Watergate cover-up conspiracy, even his ten die-hard Republican supporters on the committee announced that they favored impeachment. A president should be removed, they wrote in a minority addendum, "only for serious misconduct dangerous to the system of government established by the Constitution." Among the Nixon loyalists who endorsed that statement was Trent Lott, then a freshman representative. Hyde, Lott, and their fellow Republicans will have a hard time persuading Democrats—and the country—that Clinton's misdeeds, deplorable though they are, pose a serious threat to our constitutional system.

A third factor that makes it difficult to imagine a national consensus for impeaching Bill Clinton has to do with the changing role of the presidency in American life. Vietnam, Watergate, and now the Clinton sex scandal have deflated the majesty and aura of the presidency. So has a style of media coverage that encourages presidential candidates to bare their souls and confess their foibles on national television. Bill Clinton is more liked but less revered than Richard Nixon. Paradoxically, this lack of reverence protects Clinton from the sense of outrage and injured idealism that made the impeachment of Nixon possible.

On the evening of July 27, I sat in Room 2141 of the Rayburn House Office Building as Chairman Rodino asked the clerk to call the roll. The room fell silent as, one by one, the members of the committee answered "aye" or "no." The "ayes" were softly spoken, barely audible. It was a moment of almost religious solemnity. When the first article of impeachment was voted, Rodino's gavel came down, and the press surged forward, as it always did, to the front of the room where the members sat. My task was to get a quote from the formidable Barbara Jordan, the Democratic congresswoman from Houston who had distinguished herself throughout the hearings with her forceful eloquence. "I don't want to talk to anyone about anything right now," she exploded. With tears in her eyes, she escaped to a back room. I retreated, shaken by the encounter. Even Democrats hostile to Nixon felt the awesome burden of impeaching him. It is difficult to imagine a similar moment of civic trembling today. •

ON THE HILL

MORAL MINORITY

By David Grann

Last January, just after the Monica Lewinsky scandal broke, ABC News rushed Bill Kristol, the genial conservative publisher of *The Weekly Standard*, onto the air to predict what The People might do. "We are now in the final days," he said. If the president "lied to the American people about having a sexual relationship with an intern," he added, "and if it's very clear he's lied, I think he's finished." A week later, when polls showed Bill Clinton's job-approval ratings hadn't budged, Kristol tried to explain the delay to CNN's Larry King: "I'm a little surprised. I'm not sure that people have really thought that through.... I think it will be different in a month." A month later, when polls showed Clinton's approval ratings actually rising, Kristol seemed shaken. Once the people really know the truth, the GOP strategist insisted, "the whole dynamic" will change. Then, five months later, with the whole truth out and the public as ambivalent as ever, Kristol finally snapped. "They're wrong!" he cried on CNN's "Crossfire." "The majority of the American people, at this stage, is wrong!"

Something remarkable, and a little comic, is happening to the GOP. All at once, the self-proclaimed populists have lost control of their audience—and even begun to turn against it. Just a few days ago in the Speaker's Lobby, a room off the House floor where lawmakers ordinarily explain to reporters how they're carrying out the people's mandate, Pennsylvania Representative Phil English told me the electorate was "numb." Other Republicans complained the voters were "stupid," "stubborn," and "childish." During one House session, Michael Oxley, a subcommittee chairman, even entered into the congressional record an op-ed piece by the moral arbiter William Bennett accusing an apathetic public of being "complicit" in the president's crimes.

Spokesmen for the conservative movement seem equally flummoxed. James Dobson, head of Focus on the Family, mailed a letter in September to more than two million Americans, warning that "we are facing a profound moral crisis ... because our people no longer recognize the nature of evil." "Our greatest problem," he concluded, "is not in the Oval Office. It is with the people of this land." At the same time, a headline in Kristol's *Standard*, a magazine that considers itself the antithesis of paternalistic liberalism,

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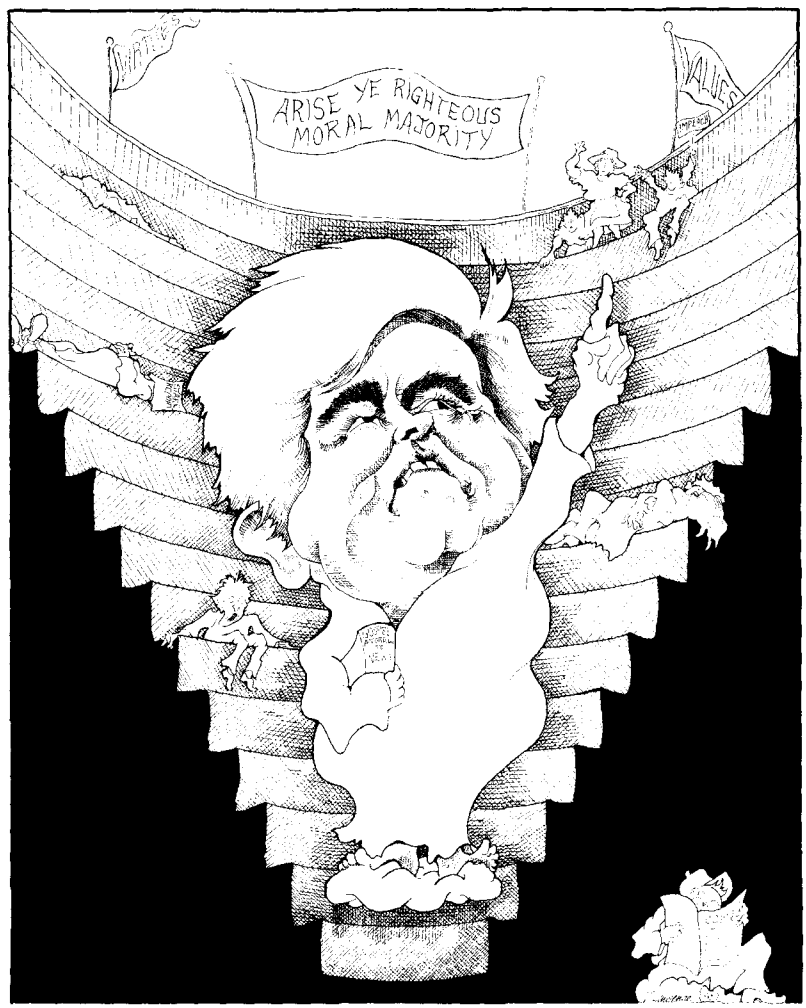
scolded: "GROW UP—AND IMPEACH." Even Pat Buchanan has turned his pitchfork on the peasantry, blurting out one evening on "Crossfire": "They're wrong. That's it."

The people, of course, may in fact be wrong. Alexander Hamilton once called the public a "great beast." The Constitution was written to contain the people's impulses as well as to represent their wishes; each check on democratic government was another shackle on the beast.

Yet, ever since Richard Nixon laid claim to the silent majority, the Republican Party has resembled a national mood ring, registering the sound and fury of the ordinary American. While Democrats increasingly spoke only for a narrow elite worried about civil rights, abortion, and feminism, Republicans talked about middle-class values and the tax burden. They spoke for the average Joe: the baker and the beautician, the cop on the beat and the hardhat doing construction. While marginalized Democrats waged the policy battles of the 1970s in federal court, Republicans built the silent majority into a grassroots movement, which they used to drown out their liberal foes on talk radio and in referendums. After Republicans captured the House and Senate in 1994, a triumphant Newt Gingrich declared, "This is the American people's majority and the American people's Contract, and we are passing reforms the American people want."



NEWT GINGRICH BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

But now the silent majority is, well, silent; worse, it is saving its ire, to the extent it has any, for the populists themselves. "I have never seen the people send Washington such a clear message," says University of Virginia government professor Larry Sabato, referring to the latest polls showing that 70 percent of Americans want Clinton to remain in office. In a closed-door caucus meeting two weeks ago, one Rust Belt GOP lawmaker complained that voters were so upset by Republicans' handling of the White House scandal they were even tearing down his campaign signs. In the first Judiciary Committee hearing on impeachment this week, GOP Representative Howard Coble of North Carolina recalled how one furious constituent came up to him recently and said: "I hope you die a painful death from prostate cancer."

As the Republican vox loses its populi, it has begun to perceive a kind of supernatural force at work. Clinton, in this explanation, is no mortal politician. "He is a Houdini," says Representative Jack Kingston of Georgia. He cannot only spin. "[He] is a master at jujitsu," GOP pollster Tony Fabrizio told *The New York Times*. He is not only evil. He is like "Hitler," "Stalin," *and* "Hussein," contends Ross Perot, who also once claimed to speak for the people.

The trouble with these explanations, of course, is that, if Clinton were really so extraordinary, he wouldn't be in this crisis in the first place. And so the Republicans have been reduced to sounding like the old Harvard-Yale elite—disdaining the very people who elected them. "I don't read the polls," Tom DeLay, the House majority whip, said on ABC's "This Week." "I read the Constitution." Congressman John Linder, head of the National Republican Congressional Committee, assured me the party was not paying attention to the whims of the great beast. "The polls are irrelevant," he said.

Well, not all the polls. A few days after my conversation with Linder, his organization, the NRCC, sent me a poll with an accompanying press release that boasted: "The more interested you are in voting, the more likely you are to vote Republican." Indeed, as the election approaches with record-low turnout expected, Republicans concede they are now less interested in the moral majority than the moral minority—at least until after the hearings when, as Kristol put it recently on CNN, the people will surely see "the light." •

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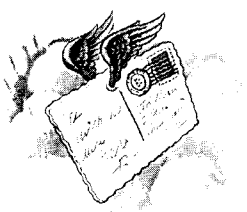
NEW MEXICO POSTCARD

KEEPING THE FAITH

By Florence Williams

It's Yom Kippur, yet Paul Carpenter is tucking into an enormous bowl of oatmeal at The Range in downtown Bernalillo, a truck-stop town between Santa Fe and Albuquerque on I-25. Carpenter may be Jewish, but he's not ready to commit just yet. It's been a recent revelation, and his head is still spinning. A 68-year-old retired professor, Carpenter had been teaching a continuing-education course at the University of New Mexico on the history of the descendants of secret Jews in the American Southwest for four years when he learned he had more than an academic connection to the topic. A few months ago, his first cousin once removed told him that her grandmother (his aunt) used to kiss a mezuzah after nightly prayers. Another cousin traced the family lineage back to the northern New Mexico expedition of Don Juan de Oñate in 1598, a group at least partly made up of Jews fleeing the Spanish Inquisition.



To Carpenter, who grew up the son of a Hispanic mother and an Anglo father in a tiny town near the Colorado-New Mexico border, it all made sense. "Catholicism never appealed to me. When I was a boy, my Uncle Delfino once took me aside and said, 'Don't worry about the Holy Trinity. Just pray to the Father.'" Now Carpenter is studying Hebrew and learning the Torah. "It's amazing to be sixty-eight and not know who you are," he says. "I feel cheated not having grown up with that part of my culture. But I'm finding it now."

Carpenter is one of many deep-rooted Hispanics in northern New Mexico whose identities have been strapped into a roller coaster in recent years. Only in the past decade has much of the historical and genetic evidence linking New Mexicans to Spanish and Portuguese Jews been publicized—for instance, a medical student in Albuquerque recently noticed an unusually high incidence of a rare skin disease found more commonly among Jews. And more and more Hispanics have stepped forward to speak of Jewish customs in their childhood. Many of them did not know why candles were lit on Friday nights or why certain dietary rules were followed. "My uncle told us the family was allergic to pork, but he didn't know what would happen if we ate it," remembers Carpenter.

Most historians who study the topic agree that a significant number of arrivals in New Spain were *conversos*, Spanish Jews who had become Catholic—at least outwardly—after King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella offered them a choice between baptism and expulsion in 1492. That same awful choice was imposed upon the Jews of Portugal five years later. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Mexican arm of the Spanish Inquisition tried many settlers here for being *judaizante*, or secretly practicing the Jewish faith. But many others probably avoided prosecution.

Stanley Hordes wrote his 1980 doctoral dissertation on seventeenth-century crypto-Jews in New Spain and then became New Mexico's state historian. "Before long, I had bizarre visitors in my office, telling me their grandmother lights candles in the basement on Friday nights; so-and-so doesn't cook beans with ham," he told me. "At first I dismissed them as cranks, but the stories kept coming in. Finally, it hit me: Could it have been possible that there was a survival of residual Jewish customs and even a Jewish consciousness after an additional three hundred years?" Through carefully kept Spanish military, church, and civil records, Hordes began tracing the genealogy of his visitors. "The links are there," he says. Among the families he traced is one that went back 600 years to the sister of a prominent rabbi of Burgos, Spain. Another was that of Pojoaque valley resident Emilio Coca, a 66-year-old retired schoolteacher, whose line went back eleven generations to the family of a *converso* settler tried by the Inquisition in New Mexico.

Coca says that his family always consciously preserved its Jewish faith. He grew up celebrating Jewish holidays and eating meat that was slaughtered according to Jewish custom. The men in his family have always been circumcised. Remarkably, he says his family didn't hide its faith—after all, most of the neighbors practiced the same customs. I visited him at his small adobe house the day before meeting Carpenter. For two hours, he projected slides of gravestones on the wall. It felt illicit, not just because these were someone else's ancestors. To Coca, the pictures are deeply, culturally private. He wouldn't tell me where any of the gravestones are, and he had blotted out the surnames of the dead with black electrical tape. But much of the Jewish symbolism on the markers was unmistakable: Stars of David and Hebrew letters, some bold, some subtle, like a flower's stamen in the shape of the Hebrew letter *shin*. On Coca's wall hung a large, carefully framed, Civil War-era portrait of his great-grandmother. Clasped to her collar is an *escudo de David*, or Star of David.

Coca says he feels secure in his heritage. "I'm not crypto-anything," he told me. Dozens of Rosh Hashanah cards grace the coffee table next to his easy chair. And he and his wife of 38 years, a transplanted Ashkenazi New Yorker, attend a Conservative synagogue in Los Alamos.

Coca's case, however, is unusual. Most descendants of *conversos* became devout Catholics, the dominant cultural influence in the Hispanic Southwest, or incorporated elements of several religions. "My sister calls

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herself a Sephardic Catholic," one woman told me. And at least half a dozen local groups and conferences have sprouted to help newly discovered crypto-Jews deal with what is often a painful and difficult revelation. Not only are the descendants often thwarting their family's desire to leave the Jewish history alone, but they also find a large cultural chasm between their Sephardic roots and the Ashkenazi roots of most New Mexican Jews. On top of that, they also face the skepticism of some scholars and Jewish legal authorities.

Rabbi Marc Angel of New York's Congregation Shearith Israel, a Sephardic synagogue, is one such stickler for Jewish law. "My problem is not that these people want to explore their roots," he explains. "That's fine, that's wonderful, that's poetic. But the question that then emerges is, 'Should they be accepted as members of the mainstream Jewish community based on these vague recollections?' I met one man in New Mexico who was wearing a *kippah* and telling me about his Jewishness, and he had a bumper sticker on the car that said, 'JESUS LOVES ME.' How can a rabbi suddenly say, 'Okay, you're a Jew'? You can't say it. Just because you have some Jewish ancestry and even feel Jewish does not make you Jewish." Angel advises crypto-Jews who want to embrace their heritage to undergo a formal conversion "just to be on the safe side."

But the non-crypto crypto-Jews are also being embraced by many of New Mexico's gringo Jews, who find the notion of a secret devotional history enduring under the junipers romantic and alluring. They seem grateful that Jews have at long last gained rank in the state's already dynamic mix of Pueblo Indians, Hispanics, and crystal-worshiping mystics. One popular Española artist, Diana Bryer, has started portraying such syncretic scenes as a tortilla-maker under a Star of David in her paintings. Theresa and Richard Montoya, who sell folk-art *retablos* off the High Road to Taos, now include characters from the Old Testament among the standard-issue saints. "We had requests from Jewish people," shrugs Theresa. Meanwhile, the Lubavitcher representatives of New Mexico and several area rabbis now counsel descendants seeking conversion or what the less stringent rabbis more palatably term "affirmation." And, during the recent High Holiday season, when Conservative Jews in Santa Fe were offered a full complement of Yom Kippur services for the first time, several crypto-Jews also attended. "We can learn from each other," said visiting Rabbi Seth Kunin at Temple Beth Shalom's Kol Nidre service. "Many of us take our Jewishness for granted, and here are people who have had to struggle enormously to keep a Jewish consciousness alive for five hundred years."

Does all this synergy mean Hispanic Jews will start eating bagels instead of tortillas? Hardly. "I'm still a farm boy," says Carpenter, downing the last of his oatmeal. "I still don't get 'Seinfeld.' But," he adds, "I might start up a *converso* square dance club."

FLORENCE WILLIAMS is a writer in Montana.

Hard times in the Persian Gulf.

CHEAP SHEIKH

By Patrick Clawson

Renowned for their secrecy and bland public pronouncements, Saudi Arabia's leaders almost never make news. But, when the kingdom's number-two man, Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz, visited Washington last month, he dropped a bombshell. Meeting with executives from seven major U.S. oil companies, Abdullah shocked them by asking for help developing the kingdom's energy resources. Here was Abdullah, who has a reputation for nationalism and ambivalence toward the West, inviting back the same oil companies whose operations the Saudis so triumphantly nationalized 25 years ago. What the crown prince did not say—but what the companies knew—is why the Saudis have had a sudden change of heart: they're broke.

Two decades ago, the oil sheikhs of the Persian Gulf could make the world tremble when they gathered to adjust the world price of crude. Since then, an oil glut has driven the cost per barrel to one-fifth what it was at the 1980 peak. And, while the resulting low oil prices have fueled a boom here in America, they have been catastrophic for the Arab monarchies—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Oman, and Qatar—that make up the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

Having neither saved nor invested for the lean years, the GCC countries have become *nouveaux pauvres*. Since 1973, they have frittered away a staggering $3 trillion (at 1997 prices) in oil and gas revenue. Since 1982, Saudi Arabia has managed not only to spend every cent of its $140 billion in reserves but to run up a national debt of nearly $130 billion—almost the size of its national income. Seventeen years ago, the GCC residents had an average per capita income of $28,000 at 1997 prices; today, it is just $12,000 (and even less if we use the Saudis' exaggerated estimate of their country's population). Then, they earned 125 percent as much as Americans and twice as much as Israelis. Today, their average income is only half that of Americans and three-fourths that of Israelis. Unemployment among Saudi men in their twenties is estimated at 25 percent. A shocked U.S. businessman told me young Saudis now apply for menial jobs in his factory, and some even stay a few weeks before quitting. High school graduates remain dependent on their fathers, with lots of time to sit around mosques discussing who is responsible for this sad state of affairs.

The obvious targets of that discontent are their rulers, who, in addition to being greedy and corrupt, have not

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trained their people for life after the oil bonanza. Nearly all Gulf Arab men work for their governments, leaving productive labor almost entirely to foreign laborers from East Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and poorer Arab countries. Seeking to convince me that his countrymen were more competitive than others in the region, one Gulf labor minister assured me people there worked a full four hours a day! (He was wrong.)

And this situation will likely get worse. Fifteen years ago, 200,000 Saudis studied in U.S. and European universities. Today, due to tight money, fewer than 20,000 Saudis study abroad. As for the 140,000 studying at Saudi universities, 30 percent are in Islamic studies, and religion constitutes one-third of the course work for the other 70 percent. As one despondent Western-trained Saudi professor put it to me, Islam is the only area where unemployed young Saudis are more expert than their fathers—and, naturally, these young men think the world should be reordered to put a higher value on their knowledge.

Meanwhile, the GCC countries face daunting bills to renovate the infrastructure built during the oil boom. Due to the population explosion and aging facilities, Saudi Arabia's capital Riyadh has to deliver drinking water to poor neighborhoods with trucks, while the government scrambles to finance a new pipeline and multibillion-dollar desalination plants. The phone system is so hopelessly backlogged that, two years ago, 100,000 Saudis rushed to put down $3,000 deposits on mobile-phone service from a network that did not yet exist. Last month, a Japanese businessman complained to me that, more than a year after his factory started production, the Saudis were still refusing to connect it to the power grid—he has to use generators—and could provide only two phone lines.

Cutting back on monarchical privileges would free up money for infrastructure and debt payments. But the Gulf leaders continue to insist that a revived oil market will save them—and in this they are almost certainly mistaken. If anything, depressed Asian economies will soon be demanding less oil, while Iraq, thanks to eased United Nations sanctions, will be pumping out more. Concern over global warming is likely to depress demand in the long run, while new technology makes production cheaper in competing countries.

The irony is that the GCC economies could prosper if the right policies were in place. After all, the post-oil-boom generation has produced some world-class businessmen. Take, for example, Prince Alwaleed bin Talal. Despite his royal lineage, this remarkable entrepreneur has no inside track in Saudi Arabia. (His father, the most famous 1960s reformist "Young Prince," still causes waves—in a recent interview, he shocked the family by advocating democracy and warning that "political reforms will impose themselves through globalization.") Instead, Prince Alwaleed's net worth of $13 billion has come from his business acumen. He first attracted attention with his far-sighted $590 million investment in a rebounding Citicorp in 1991. He also has large stakes in EuroDisney, Apple Computer, and Four Seasons and Mövenpick hotels, and a joint venture with Bill Gates and Craig McCaw. But, because of the medieval financial systems in the GCC countries, almost none of his wealth—or that of the $800 billion in assets held by GCC nationals abroad—will come home soon.

To be sure, the Gulf's economic downturn probably does not presage an Iranian-style revolution, as many in Washington now fear. The Gulf monarchs, unlike the Shah, know what they're up against and could use tribal and extended family connections to discipline revolutionary hotheads. The bad news, though, is that the economics of the Persian Gulf are likely to complicate the politics of the Persian Gulf. Nervous monarchies will be eager to appease the Islamists—after all, they'd rather not have a revolution to put down—and that, in turn, will often run counter to U.S. interests.

First, expect Gulf countries to reduce cooperation with the U.S. military. If that means a full return to a 1970s-style, standoffish military relationship—no resident U.S. forces, no joint exercises, and certainly no burden-sharing payments—the United States will be left with the responsibility for repelling aggression but with fewer means for doing so effectively. With less military presence, the United States would be less able to deter rogues from starting trouble in the first place.

Second, the Gulf monarchies will likely go back to being part of the Arab-Israeli problem, rather than part of the solution. Whereas Qatar and Oman once hosted multilateral peace talks and permitted Israeli "trade" offices, GCC governments are now returning to their old practice of underwriting opposition to Arab-Israeli peace. During his recent triumphal tour of the Gulf, Hamas leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin received a pledge of as much money from GCC governments as they have provided Yasir Arafat's Palestinian Authority in the last four years.

And, finally, forget obtaining GCC financial support for U.S. policy initiatives elsewhere. Simply put, the money won't be there. In the past, the United States has asked the Saudis to help finance U.S. foreign policy efforts, ranging from reconstructing Bosnia to providing fuel to North Korea. Now the Saudis may be rattling the tin cup. In August, there was a serious run on the Saudi currency, and the kingdom will be lucky to get through the next decade without needing an IMF-orchestrated bailout. In short, the first years of the new century may look more like the Gulf's radical 1950s than the region's fun-loving '70s: countries convulsed by economic unrest; rulers preoccupied with domestic problems while unsure how close to be to the West; masses simultaneously loathing America and yearning to emulate it. Of course, with the rest of the world reeling from economic hard times, why should the Gulf's petroleum moguls be spared the pain?

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TRAGEDY OF ERRORS

By Roy Gutman

ORAHOVAC, YUGOSLAVIA

The killers arrived at ten o'clock at night at the Tekke, a centuries-old institution of Albanian Muslim religious education in the center of this town in Yugoslavia's war-torn Kosovo province. They smashed windows and called out the name of the elderly Muslim cleric.

"I am here. Don't break the windows," said Sheh Muhedin Shehu as he appeared at the entrance. "Everything that is here I give to you." But Serb police wanted *him*. Next came the sound of gunshots. Nekip Shehu, a distant relative of the Sheh, heard the noise, looked across the street, and saw the Sheh, a saint to his followers in Orahovac, slumped on the ground before the Tekke. He was dead.

No one knows for sure how many other Albanians were killed during the Serb police onslaught in Orahovac ten weeks ago—the figures range from less than 50 to more than 500. Outside forensic experts have not been allowed to examine four reputed mass graves. Yugoslavia's Serb-dominated judicial system has not pursued the killers, and Serbian political authorities have resorted to using their state media to propound the big lie that the rebel Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), which had already been expelled from the town by the time of the Sheh's killing, was responsible.

Over the last eight months, Kosovo has been transformed, and not for the better. The province of two million people, of whom 90 percent are Albanians, has long lived under an apartheid-like system run by the Serb minority. But, since February, the dominant Albanian response has shifted from one of passive resistance to one of guerrilla warfare. At first, the new approach seemed to be working, by provoking a Serb crackdown that played into the KLA's hands: a Serb assault against three KLA-controlled villages in the Drenica region in late February and early March, in which 83 Albanians, including 24 women and children, were killed, sent outraged Albanians flocking to the KLA's pro-independence banner.

But the battle at Orahovac, with its gratuitous murder of Sheh Muhedin and untold other civilians, marked a watershed of a different kind. Flush with its early success, the KLA had thought it could mass its forces and take control of this town of about 22,000 with conventional military tactics. Instead, the police and soldiers of Yugoslavia's Serbian nationalist president, Slobodan Milosevic, landed a massive counterpunch. The KLA has been on the run ever since.

To be sure, the casualties in Kosovo, to the extent we know them, are a fraction of those in Bosnia at the same point in that country's war. There is still no sign of an actual genocidal plan like "ethnic cleansing," although the murder of prominent figures like Sheh Muhedin suggests such an agenda exists in some quarters of the Serbian government. But the bad news is that up to 300,000 Kosovo Albanians, or Kosovars, are now displaced—including some 50,000 living in the open as winter approaches. Dozens of villages have been destroyed, and the confirmed death toll, just below 800, is certain to be revised upward.

It is a depressing, and embarrassing, spectacle for U.S. and European policymakers, who find their vow to prevent "another Bosnia" in the Balkans looking less and less credible. At the moment, Clinton administration envoy Richard Holbrooke is in Belgrade, attempting to persuade Milosevic to comply with United Nations resolutions calling on him to withdraw his troops and armor and to lift a blockade on relief deliveries to the Kosovars. Holbrooke's "or else" in the talks is the threat of NATO air strikes against Yugoslav military forces. Milosevic has made some highly publicized token troop withdrawals, but, as of this writing, there has been no breakthrough.

The American endgame is for Milosevic to accept a peace deal granting Kosovo autonomy within the Yugoslav federation. If he does, expect the Clinton administration to hail yet another victory for "diplomacy backed by force." But the administration is only beginning to admit the obvious, which is that, bombing or no bombing, even an interim autonomy settlement will require tens of thousands of peacekeepers on the ground. It will also probably solidify Milosevic's position in power, because his likely price for agreement will be the lifting of the last of the economic sanctions that are still in force against him.

The real question, however, is whether autonomy is a

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strategic objective that makes any sense—either morally or in the sense of whether it will actually bring stability to the Balkans. To be sure, few U.S. and European policymakers have even bothered to entertain the only alternative: independence. Indeed, for the NATO countries, an independent Kosovo is unthinkable. "We fear this like the devil fears holy water," a West European NATO envoy told me. The first reason is their concern that an independent Kosovo will attempt to unite with Albania, producing a regional "greater Albania" movement that could ignite insurrection among the large and restive Albanian population in the northern and western sections of next-door Macedonia. Such an insurgency could not only destroy the Macedonian state; it could also draw countries such as Greece and Bulgaria into a full-blown Balkan war.

The West's qualms about the expansionist aims of Kosovo's Albanians have hardly been allayed by the KLA, about whose intentions and tactics serious questions have emerged. Rising from obscurity after Drenica, the KLA won a wide and enthusiastic following and took charge of a vast area of the country, but, when the predictable Serb counteroffensive came in Orahovac, the KLA melted away, giving no protection to the population it claimed to represent. The KLA makes the pretense of observing the Geneva conventions but does not provide the International Committee of the Red Cross access to its prisoners. Its denunciations of more moderate Kosovo politicians, its inaccessibility (no major U.S. news organization has profiled the KLA in depth), and its lack of a visible leadership to articulate its demands and those of the Albanian population suggest that it is living in a different world from the countrymen it claims to represent.

NATO also opposes an independent Kosovo because of the precedent it would set much farther afield. Washington argues that independence for Kosovo will undo the shaky U.S. success in Bosnia, because, if Kosovo declares independence, the Serbian entity in Bosnia, the Republika Srpska, will secede and join Serbia. And it is said that the implications of Kosovo's independence could extend as far as NATO-member Turkey, which has given refuge to tens of thousands of Albanians since the 1920s, including those expelled from northern Greece, but fears the example an independent Kosovo might set for its own Kurdish separatists.

Such fears help explain why there were no air strikes by NATO during the fighting for Orahovac, when outside military support could have really made some difference in the war's outcome. Western leaders, wary of the rigid and seemingly undemocratic KLA, decided to let the Yugoslav Army have a free hand rather than facili-

Home fires

As the world focuses on Slobodan Milosevic's war in Kosovo, the Yugoslav president has initiated a parallel behind-the-scenes offensive against some of the last bastions of independent thinking and action within the rest of Serbia. Both operations are part of a strategy by Milosevic to regain political control over Serbia and federal Yugoslavia after last year's mass demonstrations against him and the success of an anti-Milosevic coalition in Montenegro's last elections. In Kosovo, he's subduing his foes with force. In Serbia, he's doing so through new laws that eviscerate free expression, academic and professional autonomy, and the rule of law.

The passage of the new media law, for instance, ostensibly recodifying existing restrictions on free expression, has caused the revocation of 178 out of 425 radio and TV broadcast licenses and the imposition of $15,000 license fees, which few small stations can afford. Small independent broadcast media gathered under the Association of Independent Electronic Media continue to broadcast, and the largest of these, B92, has even received a temporary license. But all are under constant threat. Moreover, the new law reinforced previous rules that make publishing negative material about government officials or policies liable to both criminal and civil charges of slander. The attorney-client privilege has also been eviscerated by a new law giving police the right to search lawyers' offices if they do not cooperate with investigations.

The most important new law may be the one directed at Serbia's universities. While hardly hotbeds of radical opposition, the universities had remained among the few places where independent scholarship and thinking were able to survive. In fact, it was the sustained series of protests by students at Belgrade University, supported by many professors, that inspired the 1996–97 mass pro-democracy demonstrations that forced Milosevic to recognize the opposition coalition's municipal election victories in many of Serbia's largest cities.

The new law passed on May 26, however, has eradicated all autonomy for the universities and put them under direct control of the state. All administrative and faculty appointments will now be made by the government, without any say from the faculty or students. The law also abolished all tenure and other existing contracts. The idea was to force all employees to reapply for a new contract, which would serve, in effect, as an oath of loyalty to the government.

Those professors who have refused to sign the new labor contract are in many instances simply being replaced with loyal cadres from the Socialist Party and its current political partners, the extreme nationalist Radical Party of Vojislav Seselj and the hardcore Communist party, Yugoslav United Left, led by Milosevic's wife, Mirjana Markovic. Perhaps the most dramatic appointment is that of Seselj as a member of Belgrade University's management board and also as head of the board of the Law Faculty. Seselj is best known as the leader of a paramilitary detachment that carried out some of the most brutal ethnic cleansing in Croatia and Bosnia.

The new hires are already making changes. The new dean of the Faculty of Philology, one of Belgrade University's most prestigious schools, has decided to shrink the number of the school's departments. Among those being eliminated is the Department for World Literature because "this is a Serbian faculty" and there is no need

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tate an Albanian military victory that could have led to a rout of Serb forces from the province.

But how valid are the West's policy assumptions? During my recent travels for *Newsday* to Orahovac and other points in Kosovo and the surrounding lands, it became clear that there is another scenario—a different "big picture" that needs to be kept in mind. Its elements are these: Milosevic's Yugoslavia is a crumbling, demoralized basket case, whose principal component, Serbia, is seemingly headed for self-destruction. Not even Milosevic's fellow ethnic Serbs in Montenegro, Serbia's small sister republic, want to remain in this federation as long as Milosevic controls it. Meanwhile, the Kosovars, despite years of repressive Serbian rule, have managed to forge both the psychological and operational rudiments of a new nation. So why should they be forced to stay in Serbia? Moreover, it may just be that the Albanian dominoes won't fall in the way U.S. and European policymakers fear. Rather, the real danger to the stability of the region may come from a policy premised on prolonging the life of Milosevic's doomed federation.

One reason for the West's misreading of the current situation is its misreading of the history. It is striking how often outsiders resort to the Serbian government mantra that Kosovo is Serbia's "Jerusalem." This notion derives from the importance in Serbian mythology of Kosovo Polje, the scene of a battle in 1389 in which the Serbian Army under Prince Lazar lost to the Ottoman Turks. Serbs are still taught to regard the battlefield and its surrounding territory as sacred ground that cannot and must not be surrendered. But the more relevant history lies in the more recent past—and is now easily accessible in Noel Malcolm's recently published *Kosovo: A Short History*. It is the story of how, in 1912, in the wake of the Ottoman Empire's collapse, land-locked Serbs eager to capture not only Kosovo's sacred ground, but her natural resources and the seaports of her next-door neighbor Albania, launched a brutal colonial-style takeover. And it is the story of how, over the remainder of this century, despite resorting to massacres, forced religious conversion, the banning of the Albanian language, the destruction of entire villages, and repeated attempts at colonization, the Serbs never managed to erase the cultural and national identity of their intended subjects.

Under Tito, Yugoslavia's federal police chief, Alexander Rankovic, a Serb, had singled out Kosovo Albanians for brutal suppression. But, after Rankovic's dismissal in 1966, Albanians demanded the status of an autonomous province within Serbia. Tito, concerned that the Kosovars were being pushed beyond their breaking point, granted Kosovo most of what it wanted and, in 1974, enshrined Kosovo's autonomy in a new constitu-

for studying anything other than Serbian literature. Likewise, the Croatian Literature Department is being removed since it is just "the literature of Catholic Serbs."

So far, the new law has been met with only scattered opposition. An open letter of protest from the Serbian Association of University Professors and Scientists attracted some 300 signatures. Several respected deans have resigned rather than submit to loyalty tests, and about 70 professors from Belgrade University's Faculty of Philosophy have signed a petition stating that they still consider themselves, according to the Serbian constitution and other laws, legally employed professors and associates of the faculty. Still, an international campaign launched by the Belgrade Circle, an association of independent intellectuals, has had little impact. On campus, demonstrations organized by the Student Unions, a group of independently organized student organizations at nine of Belgrade University's 38 faculties, attracted only a relative handful of participants.

This contrasts sharply with the many thousands of students who last year continued to march in the streets for four months, even after Milosevic had agreed to recognize the municipal election results, in order to achieve their additional demand that the appointment of a pro-government university rector be rescinded. One reason for the weak response this time is that initial repressive proposals affecting students, most importantly those related to conscription, were withdrawn from the proposed law, diminishing the reason for any student protest and successfully dividing the students' interests from their professors'.

Authorities also timed the introduction of the law to coincide with the end of the school year, reasoning, correctly it turned out, that students would hesitate to forfeit another year's worth of exams. Finally, as Zoran Nikolic, a leader of the Student Union movement, explains, students are tired and alienated after seeing how the political opposition's internal bickering squandered the opportunity of last year's demonstrations, thus bringing about very little change.

Now that he has co-opted the universities, Milosevic's next target is likely to be the emerging sector of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that today form one of the very few avenues for anti-nationalist, civic-oriented, pro-democratic activity.

It is hardly to be expected that the West, which has been unable to act decisively in the face of the more urgent crisis in Kosovo, will act any more decisively to defend the autonomy of Serbia's NGOs—or, for that matter, its universities, attorneys, or media. But the West should understand that the attacks on these last islands of liberalism are a grave threat to any possibility of democratic change and peace, and should vigorously work to expand those islands instead of continuing to treat Milosevic as the sole political alternative in Serbia. After ten years of living off nationalist populism, Milosevic is trying to eradicate any such alternative by institutionalizing a totalitarian order. That can only lead to violence and instability in the Balkans.

RUZICA ROSANDIC and
ERIC CHENOWETH

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tion. Under the new arrangement, Kosovo's Albanians ran their own municipal affairs and police, health and education, while holding one of eight seats on the collective Yugoslav presidency that succeeded Tito after he died in 1980.

But in 1989, Milosevic, having ridden an ultranationalist tide to power in Serbia, suspended Kosovo's autonomy. By decree and legislation, the Serbian government and parliament removed Albanians from municipal posts and replaced them with Serbs from Serbia; they also purged the courts and state enterprises and closed schools and clinics as well as the Albanian-language radio and television stations. Once again, Serbo-Croatian replaced the Albanian language in schools and official business. Serbs were prohibited from selling their land to non-Serbs, and programs were introduced to attract Serb settlers into the region. Torture of political detainees, politicized trials, and deaths under unexplained circumstances became common occurrences.

Yet, in the face of this renewed repression, Albanian culture has not only survived but adapted, flourished, and modernized. Instead of attending the Serb schools, the Albanians started their own schools in their own language—using vacant houses as classrooms. Deprived of work, Kosovars went abroad, primarily to Western Europe, where they developed into a diaspora of some 400,000, which today sends back the cash that keeps businesses running and families fed (and, lately, the KLA armed). In the absence of state subsidies for schools and other services, Albanians taxed themselves. Because banks were Serb-controlled, Albanians devised their own banking system, using travel agencies. When Serbs took over the state health service, Albanians set up special "Mother Teresa" clinics, named for the late Albanian-born benefactor of the poorest of the poor. In May of this year, the former staff of local radio and television stations shut down by the Serbs set up a radio station that "broadcasts" via the Internet internationally and to the few hundred Albanians with equipment in Kosovo (*www.radio21.net*).

In the course of this self-sustained institution-building, a nation is being forged. "I don't feel myself a victim," says Aferdita Saracini-Kelmendi, Radio 21's director. "The other side is a victim of all they are doing here. Defenders always win. We are patient. We have higher morale, because we are defending what is ours." Eventual victory, she asserts, is certain. "Our independence is already there. No one can take it away. They can take my life but nothing else. The consciousness is there."

Indeed, the rising national consciousness in Kosovo contrasts starkly with the social and moral decline of Serbia itself. (See "Home Fires," by Ruzica Rosandic and Eric Chenoweth, page 16.) After four wars during the decade of Milosevic's rule, the atmosphere in Belgrade is one of despair, not triumph. Last summer, the health system defaulted on payments to its main drug supplier. Under Western sanctions, Serbia has all but exhausted its hard-currency reserves, and, were it not for oil reputedly obtained from China, no one can say how the state could have undertaken the military crackdown in Kosovo.

"This country is like a terminal stage of cancer. One month it goes better; one month worse. But the country, the nation, will die," says Bratislav Grubatic, editor-in-chief of the weekly *Belgrade Times*. "Our whole system reduces to a sort of court, not a proper state. It is based on Milosevic, personally." Grubatic sees the trend as "collective suicide."

The decline in Serbia has profound implications for Montenegro, a mountainous republic with 630,000 inhabitants (one-fifteenth the population of Serbia). Montenegro is, along with Serbia, all that remains of what was once a six-republic Yugoslav federation; it borders both Serbia and Kosovo. Its population is mostly ethnic Serb, but there is a substantial Albanian minority that, unique in Slavic lands, has few complaints about official repression.

In what may be the most incomprehensible of all his policies, Milosevic has slapped an economic embargo on Montenegro and started a debilitating constitutional battle by naming Momcilo Bulatovic, the arch political rival of Montenegro's reformist President Milo Djukanovic, as the federal Yugoslav prime minister. Montenegro responded by blocking all legislation in the upper house of the federal assembly. And, this week, after boycotting the joint session of the Yugoslav federal parliament, Djukanovic publicly demanded that Milosevic bow to Western demands over Kosovo to avert punitive NATO air strikes. "Milosevic must immediately address the public with an unequivocal message that ... he is ready to respect all commitments undertaken with Russian President Boris Yeltsin and those contained in [last month's] U.N. resolution," Djukanovic said.

Officially, Montenegro is trying to "reform" the Milosevic-led Yugoslav regime, but, in fact, it is heading for the door. Montenegro "is pursuing its long-established tradition of an independent and free state," Kiro Gligorov, the president of Macedonia, told me. "It cannot come to terms with being a second-rate republic in a federation." Filip Vujanovic, the Montenegrin prime minister, observed, "One state shouldn't be ruined just because we have a bad regime on the top. Such a regime should be destroyed." And Montenegro's departure would mean the end of Yugoslavia. "If he loses Montenegro, the whole story is done," said Grubatic. For, without a Yugoslavia, there would be no even superficially legitimate entity to which Kosovo could be bound.

But what of the theory that Kosovo's independence would lead to a domino effect in Macedonia? Well, Macedonia is, admittedly, a potentially explosive place. No one is more opposed to independence for Kosovo than the Slavs of Macedonia. "There is going to be a catastrophe if any borders in the Balkans are changed," Lazar Kitanovski, the Macedonian defense minister,

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warned. Iljaz Halimi, a leading official of the Democratic Party of Albanians in Macedonia, which the government calls extremist, adds: "You cannot localize a popular insurrection." If the war continues in Kosovo and expands, Albanians in Macedonia "will try to help" their "brothers" in Kosovo, says Halimi. "If Albanians here take up weapons, we will demand our rights" in Macedonia.

Albanians in Macedonia—who officially make up 24 percent of the population but probably more, according to the local community—have real grievances. Visit the Tetovo Tekke, a fifteenth-century site founded by the mystical Bektashian order, which the Communists seized after World War II and the state still controls. Booming loudspeakers broadcast Slavic dance music day and night, and, at night, drunken partygoers sometimes urinate on the ancient tombstones. Until this spring, a hotel built at the site served as a brothel, according to Tahir Emini, the *baba*, or priest, who gained access to a small part of the grounds four years ago by staging a sit-in and a three-week hunger strike.

Tetovo, where the population of 172,000 is three-quarters Albanian, now has an underground Albanian-language university that Macedonia refuses to recognize. Its elected mayor is in jail for having raised the Albanian flag before the city hall. Albanians are effectively barred from the Macedonian-dominated police, judiciary, state enterprises, and government administration.

For all that, however, it is hardly a foregone conclusion that Kosovo's independence would lead to the instant fracturing of Macedonia. Arben Xhaferi, the Albanian party chairman, operates within the Macedonian political system and says he wants to preserve the borders of the republic. He told a recent meeting at the U.S. Institute of Peace in Washington that the Albanians' "dangerous confrontation" with Slav Macedonians can be resolved "by peaceful, civilized means." They want a proportional electoral system, a two-chamber parliament to protect their rights, a referendum, and other measures. He says his idea would "not entail change of borders" but would serve to end ethnic competition and conflict and create stability within existing borders. The implications of all his demands go beyond his stated goals, but, on many basic issues, Xhaferi's position is based on fact.

This might be the basis for American preventive diplomacy aimed at keeping Macedonia's Albanians happy within that republic, which is shaky but still basically peaceful and more politically moderate than Milosevic's realm. Among Albanians in Macedonia, at least, there is no zeal for building a "Greater Albania." Members of Xhaferi's party told me that the idea is a fantasy. To them, anarchic, impoverished Albania is a different, and unattractive, world. A half-century of Stalinist dictatorship "robbed them of their souls," says Abdurahim Sulejmani, a local activist in Tetovo. "People there have lost their sensibility. They have no idea what it means to live and work in a modern state." As for unity with Albania, "We'll leave that to our children" to accomplish.

In short, it is not an inexorable law of nature that Kosovo's independence must lead to Balkan breakdown. And, if they have any hope of coming up with a workable solution, Western policymakers would do well to disabuse themselves of that party line.

While they're at it, Western leaders might also reconsider a second assumption upon which their policy is currently based: namely, the need to do business with Milosevic. At present, the West's preferred solution to the Kosovo conflict, some form of autonomy for the province, depends entirely upon his cooperation. Yet this is the same man most responsible for creating the war in the first place.

In Bosnia, the Dayton accords ended the war only after Milosevic imposed the settlement on his minions among the Bosnian Serbs, a fact that has given him substantial leverage over the United States in subsequent dealings. (Indeed, one reason U.S. policymakers may fret so much about the impact of air strikes in Kosovo is that Milosevic could retaliate by withdrawing his reported secret police cooperation in Republika Srpska, which helps assure that local Serbs don't ambush U.S. troops deployed there.) Any Kosovo autonomy deal would leave the United States similarly beholden to the man in Belgrade.

Yet, all across the former Yugoslavia, members of all ethnic groups have told me that such a relationship would be untenable over the long term. Even Kosovo's Serbian Orthodox Bishop Artemije Radosavljevic, the articulate spokesman for moderate Serbs, warned a U.S. Institute of Peace conference last month that "with Mr. Milosevic and his regime, there cannot be any solution for Kosovo, or any other problem." •

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Howard Gardner's campaign against logic.

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCE DISORDER

By James Traub

Howard Gardner first realized that he had struck a chord in the national psyche when he gave a speech to private-school administrators on his new theory of "multiple intelligences" and saw the headmasters elbowing each other to get into the hall. That was in 1983. Since that time, Gardner, a Harvard professor who still carries a book bag and wears a ski parka over his tweed jacket, has blossomed into a genuine academic superstar. He has won a MacArthur "genius" grant; his books have been translated into 20 languages; and he gives about 75 talks a year. There are now "M.I. schools" all over the country. His ideas have achieved extraordinary currency in even the most rarefied reaches of the educational world; when the directorship of one of New York's most prestigious private schools recently came open, almost every candidate for the job mentioned Gardner in his or her one-page educational-philosophy statement. In the 15 years since the publication of Gardner's *Frames of Mind*, multiple intelligences has gone from being a widely disputed theory to a rallying cry for school reformers to a cultural commonplace. And, amazingly, it has done so without ever winning over the scientific establishment.

Gardner's central claim is that what we normally think of as intelligence is merely a single aspect, or two aspects, of a much wider range of aptitudes; he has counted eight so far. Thus we have exalted the attribute measured by IQ tests—the hyperlogical style Gardner half-jokingly calls the "Alan Dershowitz" model of intelligence—and have slighted our creative and interpersonal gifts. Of course, the primary question about this theory is whether or not it's true. But an intriguing secondary question is why it's so wildly popular. "I think the whole intelligence establishment and the psychometric tradition were ready to be attacked by somebody who was credible," Gardner told me the first time I met him, in the midst of a two-day speaking tour in Chicago last December. "We know that kids who do well on tests are smart, but we also know that a lot of kids who don't do well on tests are getting it. The question is not how smart people are but in what ways people are smart." This is, of course, an immensely appealing idea.

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Gardner has offered an explanation for academic failure in which the problem lies in the system of measurement rather than the student or the teacher; more broadly, he has given intellectual legitimacy to critiques of the test-driven meritocracy and of the high-IQ elite it fosters. Multiple intelligence theory clearly serves many purposes. That makes it powerful, but not necessarily valid.

Psychometrics hasn't changed much since Alfred Binet devised a test at the turn of the century to predict which French children would succeed or fail in school. The instruments we now use to test a child's "intelligence quotient" measure essentially the same aptitudes that Binet did—memory, vocabulary, spatial thinking, the ability to draw analogies and solve puzzles—because these are the aptitudes historically associated with success in school and in professional life. While psychometricians disagree about the extent to which intelligence is an inherited trait rather than a result of environment and upbringing, there is broad consensus around the idea that intelligence is a single entity that can be measured with fairly great accuracy. The various mental aptitudes are understood as aspects of a single underlying trait called *g*, for "general intelligence."

Howard Gardner has approached the subject of intelligence from an entirely different angle, one that combines scientific research and speculation with personal experience. Gardner is a polymath, with a breadth of interests unusual in his field. As a boy, he was a serious pianist and a student of composition; as a young scholar at Harvard, where he has spent his entire professional life, he worked with Nelson Goodman, the philosopher of aesthetics. In one of his first books, *The Arts and Human Development*, published in 1973, Gardner noted that the developmental model created by the great Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget applied only to "those mental processes that culminate in scientific thought, an end state that can be expressed in logical terms." Gardner looked instead at the development of the cognitive processes involved in creative work. Several of his subsequent books have explored the thought processes of great artistic figures. Gardner had also begun to study brain-damaged patients at Boston's Veterans Admini-

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stration Hospital. He found that many of them had suffered devastating damage to a core intellectual function that had nevertheless left other functions intact—so that some aphasics who could barely comprehend speech could nevertheless recognize a metaphor or even tell a joke. This fit with an emerging consensus in neuroscience: namely, that the brain operates in "modular" fashion, with autonomous systems devoted to different mental acts.

Gardner built on these insights in *Frames of Mind*. Rather than accepting that intelligence tests captured intelligence, he drew up a series of criteria from a wide range of disciplines and assigned the title "intelligence" to whatever mental traits satisfied them. In order to make Gardner's final cut, an aptitude had to have been isolated, or spared, in instances of brain damage; had to furnish instances of prodigies or idiots savants; had to have a unique developmental and evolutionary history; and so on. These intelligences were almost wholly independent of one another; there was no master trait—no *g*. The seven winners were "linguistic" and "logical-mathematical"—the two already recognized by psychometricians—plus "musical," "spatial," "bodily kinesthetic," "intrapersonal," and "interpersonal." Gardner has since added an eighth, the "naturalist intelligence," which is the ability to make distinctions and to form classes among objects. "Existential intelligence" has been a candidate for several years, but Gardner has not yet admitted it to the pantheon.

Gardner failed to persuade his peers. George Miller, the esteemed psychologist credited with discovering the mechanisms by which short-term memory operates, wrote in *The New York Times Book Review* that Gardner's argument boiled down to "hunch and opinion." And Gardner's subsequent work has done very little to shift the balance of opinion. A recent issue of *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* devoted to the study of intelligence contained virtually no reference to Gardner's work. Most people who study intelligence view M.I. theory as rhetoric rather than science, and they're divided on the virtues of the rhetoric. Steven Ceci, a developmental psychologist at Cornell, praises Gardner as "a wonderful communicator" who has publicized "a much more egalitarian view of intelligence." But he points out that Gardner's approach of constructing criteria and then running candidate intelligences through them, while suggestive, provides no hard evidence—no test results, for example—that his colleagues could evaluate. Ceci adds: "The neurological data show that the brain is modular, but that does not address the issue of whether all these things are correlated or not." Track-and-field athletes, he notes, may have special gifts in one particular event, but they will score better than the average person on every event. Psychological tests show the same kind of correlations.

Gardner describes this conventional view of intelligence as Cartesian rather than Darwinian. Cartesians, he argues, see the mind in strictly rational and ahistorical terms. "The Darwinian view," he says, "is that this is a crazy-quilt group of faculties that we have here, and they've dealt with survival over hundreds of thousands of years in very different environments. Literacy only existed twenty-five hundred years ago. What does it mean to develop a whole theory of intelligence that didn't even exist three thousand years ago? Moreover, given that we now have computers that will do our rational behavior for us, it's an open question what the intelligences are going to be that are valued fifty years from now. It might be artistic; it might be pointless kinds of things." Why should we accept a definition of intelligence that "took a certain scholastic skill—what it meant to be a good bureaucrat a hundred years ago—and make that the quintessence of intelligence"?

But that is, in a way, precisely the problem with Gardner's theory. Intelligence is not a crisp concept but a term of value—indeed, the ultimate term of value. Some in Gardner's corner, like his mentor and colleague Jerome Bruner, say they wish Gardner had employed a more neutral term like "aptitude." But if Gardner hadn't used "intelligence" he wouldn't be the colossal figure he is today. Gardner does not shy away from the "political" dimension of his argument. "My claim that there are seven or eight Xs is not a value judgment," he told me. "It's my best reading of the biological and cultural data. But my decision to call them 'intelligences' is clearly picking a fight with a group that thought it, and it alone, could decide what intelligence was."

There may well be validity to Gardner's claim that core mental aptitudes are more autonomous from one another than psychometricians like to believe. But the reason psychologists don't measure the elements of "bodily kinesthetic" intelligence isn't that they doubt the elements exist—it's that they don't think the elements matter. Some societies may be structured around musical or athletic or spiritual attainments, but ours isn't. This is where Gardner's quarrel lies. Like Robert Coles, the author of *The Moral Intelligence of Children*, and Daniel Goleman, who wrote the wildly popular *Emotional Intelligence*, Gardner believes that we have submitted too much to the tyranny of logic. What he has elaborated over the years is the most scientifically credible and deeply pondered of the various assaults on the hegemony of logic. It's an extraordinary polemic, but it's still a polemic. And so the question it leaves us with is: Are we too preoccupied with cultivating the old-fashioned intellectual gifts, or are we not preoccupied enough?

The psychometric establishment was no match for *Frames of Mind* in the court of public opinion. Gardner had offered a vision of human nature that spoke eloquently to public disillusionment with the scientific, technocratic worldview. Although Gardner had almost nothing to say about the practical applications of his theory, he had provided a paradigm that opened up new vistas for the education of children. From the outset, educators passed *Frames of Mind* around like samizdat. Tom Hoerr, the headmaster of a private school in St. Louis, told me that he

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bought the book soon after it was published, read it with mounting excitement, and then spent months meeting after school with his faculty to discuss it chapter by chapter. A group of teachers in Indianapolis drove 14 hours to talk with Gardner about creating a school based on his philosophy. Gardner didn't have a philosophy, and yet his reticence about the world of practice had the effect of vindicating almost any departure from the traditional curriculum or traditional pedagogy made in his name.

And so began the astonishing second life of *Frames of Mind* as a template for the transformation of the schools—a transformation much in evidence today. Open up a copy of *Education Week* and you'll see ads for conferences on the "Student at Risk" and "Restructuring Elementary Schools" and "Training for Trainers"—all with presentations on M.I. theory. One progressively minded educator recently told me, "Howard is the guru, and *Frames of Mind* is the bible." Few of the teachers and administrators I talked to were familiar with the critiques of multiple intelligence theory; what they knew was that the theory worked for them. They talked about it almost euphorically. To Dee Dickinson, an educator and consultant in Seattle, *Frames of Mind* offered a "metatheory" that tied together all the effective teaching strategies she had been promoting. "Here was a new way of looking at human capacities," she said, "and a new way of identifying people's strengths and finding effective ways of helping people use those strengths." Gardner appealed to the teachers' intuitive sense that children learn in different ways, and the teachers responded to Gardner's more explicitly political agenda of democratizing human gifts. Tom Hoerr said that what he learned from Gardner was that "working with other people, working with yourself, knowing other people, is a form of intelligence." Hoerr's own motto is: "Who you are is more important than what you know."

M.I. has now spawned a burgeoning cottage industry of consultants and manuals and videotapes. Several publishers have an entire sideline of Gardneriana, and I sent away for material from several of them. One of the items I received was *Celebrating Multiple Intelligences*, a teachers' guide written by Hoerr and his staff at the New City School, one of the most highly regarded M.I. schools. The book consists of a series of lesson plans in the various intelligences, further divided according to the students' ages. In one exercise designed to stimulate the interpersonal intelligence of students from the first through third grades, children form a circle and throw a ball of string back and forth, each time saying something complimentary about the recipient. The "learner outcome" is: "Children will focus on expressing positive comments to peers who they may or may not know well." Every exercise comes with "M.I. Extensions" designed to stimulate some other intelligence—write songs about the activity, play charades to illustrate the activity, and, above all, talk about how you felt about the activity. The sensitivity toward the variety of children's abilities is connected to a broader preoccupation with diversity. In order to "look at issues of prejudice and discrimination relating to disabilities, race, gender, and religion," the teachers devised an experiment in which "each child spent six hours a day being blindfolded, wearing ear plugs, sitting in a wheelchair, or having limited use of arms and hands." It lasted five days.

Here we come to the heart of the problem with multiple intelligences—not as theory, but as practice. M.I. theory has proved powerful not because it's true but because it chimes with the values and presuppositions of the school world and of the larger culture. When theories escape into the world, they get used in ways that their inventors could scarcely have predicted or even approved. Gardner hasn't been quite sure where his responsibility lies in such matters. He told me that he cannot be the "policeman" of the world he set into motion, though he has, increasingly, been its poster boy. Gardner has begun to speak out against some of the more extreme uses of his theory, and critics like educational historian Diane Ravitch have urged him to do more. When I showed Gardner copies of some of the exercises in *Celebrating Multiple Intelligences*, he scrutinized them carefully, frowned, and said, "The only answer I can give to this is: I would certainly not want to be in a school where a lot of time was spent doing these things."

Gardner himself is a rigorous thinker, and he now takes pains to talk about "the school virtues." He often describes himself as a "disciplinarian," by which he means that he believes in the traditional academic disciplines. The intelligences, he says, are not academic ends in themselves, but means by which legitimate academic ends may be reached. For example, if a child is not particularly strong in "logical-mathematical" intelligence, the math teacher should seek a medium in which the child feels more comfortable—language or even physical movement. In *Multiple Intelligences*, a book of practical advice published in 1993, Gardner writes, "Any concept worth teaching can be approached in at least five different ways that, roughly speaking, map onto the multiple intelligences." The model school that he sketches in the book has much in common with progressive schools generally. Students work with one another as much as with the teacher; they design and carry out long-term projects rather than completing daily assignments; they seek to master concepts rather than absorb information; they spend time in real-world environments. What's different about an M.I. school is that it observes a rigorous equality among the intelligences—no "hierarchizing" of language and logic.

Whether that's desirable or not depends in part on whether you think the schools are turning out too many Dershowitz-like whiz kids or too few. Having visited several dozen schools over the last decade or so, I would suggest the answer is clearly "too few." Maybe in Japan, or even in France, are schools producing students who are too narrow; the problem in the United States is that

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students are too shallow. M.I. can, in theory, be a means of teaching deeper understanding, but it's at least as likely that it will be used in the service of a specious sense of "breadth." Chester Finn, an educational reformer and former Reagan administration official, describes M.I. pedagogy as the cognitive version of the multiculturalist view that school should offer a celebration of diversity. Harold Stevenson, a psychologist at the University of Michigan, says, "What they're trying to say is, 'You may not be able to do academic things, but you move well, or you're very good at music or spatial intelligence.'" Whatever Gardner himself intends, M.I. theory legitimizes the fad for "self-esteem," the unwillingness to make even elementary distinctions of value, the excessive regard for diversity, and the decline of diligence.

Gardner and other progressive educators are surely right that traditional pedagogy, at least as it is practiced in most schools, leads to superficial understandings and the confusion of recitation with real knowledge. Good teachers challenge their students at the deepest possible level; they understand that the mastery of facts and dates is a means to an end, not an end in itself. But it's a powerful means. And it may be better for schools to err on the side of too much of it rather than too little.

There are now hundreds of schools that claim to be based in whole or in part on M.I. pedagogy. Educational journals carry glowing accounts of schools "turned around" by M.I. A researcher working for Gardner says that she finds that trivial uses of the pedagogy are giving way to more serious ones. Gardner himself guessed that, if I were to visit 50 M.I. schools, "you'd see a lot more schools that are indistinguishable from other schools than you would schools that are Mickey Mouse"—not exactly a stirring defense. Still, he said, enough schools are using his principles wisely to demonstrate the potential power of M.I.

In the middle of this past school year, I spent a day at the Key Learning Center in Indianapolis, probably the most famous of the M.I. schools. I had expected Key to be one of those schools where kids learn everything in seven or eight ways, jumping up and down in math class and singing their way through English. In fact, the math and science classes I sat in on looked perfectly familiar. Still, M.I.'s influence was as conspicuous as the drawings of the intelligences that line the entrance corridor. Every student spends as much time on music and art as English or social studies. Students are not graded. They receive, instead, "pupil progress reports" in which their academic improvement, their level of motivation, and their "performance along the developmental continuum" are measured in terms that can't be plotted on invidious bell curves.

Peter Reynolds, a bright, mop-haired seventh-grader, was assigned to serve as my "docent." Peter talked about school in a way that I couldn't have imagined doing in seventh grade. What he liked about Key, he said, was the opportunity to "interact" with people, not only other kids, but also the adults in the school. Peter explained that every year, starting in kindergarten, students are expected to devise a project and present it to teachers and peers. In first grade, he had made a study of his pet rats and talked about how they reproduced, how they used their teeth, how they responded to different stimuli. All of the presentations were videotaped, so he had an archive of his work from the age of five.

Peter happened to be presenting his project that day. He had gone to Romania with his father and a friend, and he put a crude oak-tag map up on a stand, showed photographs of the trip, and talked about the people they had met. Most of it was pitched at the level of "it was really nice" and "it was really interesting." On the other hand, I was impressed by what Gardner would have called Peter's interpersonal intelligence. He was calm and forthright, and his classmates listened respectfully and asked questions. The whole school, in fact, had a very civilized and noncompetitive atmosphere; there was none of the waving of hands and shouting "me, me, me" that I remember from junior high. Then again, what's so terrible about a little self-aggrandizing intellectual enthusiasm at age 13?

The school did have a few semi-farcical touches. There was a "flow" room designed to foster the state of unselfconscious engagement that people attain at moments of peak creativity—a practice that rested on a theory devised by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, a psychologist who works closely with Gardner. Kids were playing computer games, "Parcheesi," or "Guess Who?"—the kind of activities I'm happy to have my seven-year-old do at home but wouldn't expect to be part of a curriculum. But the Key school was not absurd in the way that educational traditionalists imagine. It was a serious-minded place, and the kids I met seemed enthusiastic and engaged. On the other hand, if they were engaged in deep understanding, I must have missed it. The eighth-grade "linguistics" class I sat in on read through a passage in *Life On The Mississippi* without getting within hailing distance of its meaning. The school's ambitions almost seemed to be elsewhere—in fostering a sense of personal maturity, in a genuine commitment to music, in making the children conscious of their own strengths.

What the Key school is arguably about is the fostering of a new kind of child and thus of a new kind of person—less linear and more "well-rounded," less competitive and more cooperative. This is a monumental ambition, but it's actually not far from Gardner's own vision. Something grandiose lurks beneath Gardner's modesty and care—that's why he insisted on using that provocative word, "intelligence." Back in Chicago, I heard him tell spellbound special-ed teachers that we are living at the edge of a paradigm shift. "This is a new definition of human beings, cognitively speaking," he said. "Socrates defined man as a rational animal; Freud defined him as an irrational animal; what M.I. theory says is that we are the animal that exhibits the eight and a half intelligences." •

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Afterlives

A great deal of life is spent in wondering about what follows it: the afterlife. If a computer could tot up all the imaginative work on the subject throughout history—poems, novels, paintings, plays—the result would surely be oppressive. And this would not even include the, let's call it, professional material: theology. But one point about the mystery of the afterlife is no mystery—why people are concerned with it. We're all headed for it, if it's there.

Inevitably, from its early days film has been involved in realizations of the afterlife. Angels and devils, heavens and hells weave through the history of film. People are worried; and films, rich in visual resource, can reassure. Plus, to be unspiritually blunt, what sweeter way to make a nice dollar than to do that reassuring?

As it happens, I have no precise knowledge about the afterlife: but I have just added a new hope. I hope it has absolutely no resemblance to the heaven that we see in **What Dreams May Come** (Polygram). This film also gives us views of hell, which sometimes looks like those long corridors in airports from the central terminal to the gate. I could probably endure that hell, just as I've endured those corridors, but, though my life has been completely blameless and stainless, I don't want to go to that heaven.

Flowers, mountain ranges of them, suffocatingly crowded and greeting-card colored. People in nightgowns suspended in midair here and there. Music so cloying that silence seems a lost blessing. The fate of persons in this film's hell isn't exactly attractive, but at least they are spared an eternity of aggressive vulgarity.

We're told here that every person gets the heaven of his own imagining, which strikes me as a dreadful comment on the character played by Robin Williams, a physician whose being and bearing on earth had been reasonably attractive. No, this heaven was inflicted on him by the director, Vincent Ward, the designer, Eugenio Zanetti, and the composer, Michael Kamen. This heaven is not that physician's dream: it's the filmmakers' attempt at the lowest common denominator of paradises.

The screenplay by Ron Bass, from a Richard Matheson novel, is a clutch of devices to contrive the deaths of Williams, his wife, their two children, and their dog so that they can all meet again in this hothouse heaven and spend eternity together. Williams's performance is forced, as if he believes he is an Atlas holding up the whole picture. Annabella Sciorra, never quite able to shake a touch of toughness, is miscast as a sensitive wife. The two children are not appealing; the dog is. Cuba Gooding Jr. is a wraith in the afterlife; Gooding's performance is uncentered because the role has no center. A great actor, Max von Sydow, is a kind of afterlife cicerone, mouthing, with manly gravity, some dreadful stuff.

What an impertinence this picture is—a piece of candy to soothe us children who are afraid of the dark.

In 1981 I had the honor to introduce Akira Kurosawa at a press luncheon given by Japan House in New York. I remember saying that my job seemed superfluous, introducing that man to that audience, but that I was happy to have the privilege of doing it anyway. Now, with this (belated) comment following Kurosawa's death, I feel somewhat the same: he is known, esteemed, mourned. Still, I'm glad to have the privilege of saying a few words about him.

He was born in 1910, and after some training and work as a painter, at the age of 26 he answered an ad by a film studio looking for assistant directors. He had to submit an essay discussing what was wrong with Japanese films. After a few months he was called for a second round of testing—scenario writing, an oral exam, and more. The details are in his autobiography; but what strikes an outsider is that a newcomer's entry into Japanese film life, at least in those days, was organized and systematic. He was hired and was assigned to assist an experienced director, Kajiro Yamamoto, who soon recognized the younger man's qualities and did much to teach and advance him in their years of collaboration.

Kurosawa made his first film in 1943, when he was 33. *Sanshiro Sugata*, though much concerned with the judo tradition, was clearly the work of an individual talent. The career broadened as it moved. Japanese elements—kabuki, noh, samurai, postwar Japanese problems—are strong throughout; but he is known, rightly so, as one of the most Western of Japanese directors. He drew on Shakespeare (*Throne of Blood*, *Ran*), Dostoyevsky (*The Idiot*), Gorky (*The Lower Depths*),

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Lolita. *Closer to Nabokov than the 1962 version, but again unfulfilled without Nabokov's prose tapestries. Still, Dominique Swain is childishly lubricious and Jeremy Irons suffers nicely. (Reviewed 10/5/98)* **A Merry War.** *From Orwell's* Keep the Aspidistra Flying. *Sharp English satire about a young 1930s poet and his temporary escape from philistinism. (9/7/98)* **Regeneration.** *Another English poet, a real one. Siegfried Sassoon's stay in a "shell-shock" hospital during World War I because he protested the war. Intelligently written and acted. (9/14&21/98)* **Saving Private Ryan.** *Steven Spielberg's D-Day is titanic. But what follows is just a good, wry, gritty war movie. (8/17&24/98)*—**SK**

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not to mention Ed McBain (*High and Low*) and the influence of Simenon (*Stray Dog*). His directorial style reflects his admiration of Eisenstein and Ford.

Yet those facts, though certainly relevant, don't convey the shape, the quality of his career. Like other giants in film history, Kurosawa seemed to grasp all these contributory elements along with the core of this (relatively) new art and shape it all to his needs, his discoveries, his troublings. To see a retrospective of his work, which I have done twice nearly completely, from the beginnings through *Drunken Angel* and *Rashomon* and *Ikiru* and *The Seven Samurai* to *Red Beard* and *Kagemusha* and *Ran*, is to see that, like every genius, he invented his art. Of course his work can be analyzed, and analysis can enlighten, but it can't finally explain the result of the coalescence of all those elements, the transmutation that made him unique, imperial. Mozart dedicated six quartets to Haydn, from whom he learned, but what he learned was more about being Mozart.

Fundamentally, most importantly, as with all great artists in every art, there is a sense of hugeness in Kurosawa. Whether he is creating the saga of seven sixteenth-century samurai on the cusp of a different Japan or accompanying a mortally ill civil servant in modern Tokyo, the inner dimensions are immense. This is the world's great egalitarianism: the secrets in every human being, perceived by true art, are immense, spatial.

To remember Kurosawa is to remember that sense of aperture, of exaltation. It is to remember the dying civil servant in *Ikiru*, sitting on a swing in the playground that is the only real achievement of his drab life, singing in the gently falling snow. In that simple image is absolutely everything. •

Virtue and Democracy

BY NICHOLAS LEMANN

The Death of Outrage: Bill Clinton and the Assault on American Ideals by William J. Bennett

(The Free Press, 154 pp., $20)

William Bennett's essay was obviously written in some haste and then made to appear book-length through typographic artisanship and the addition of an unnecessary afterword, postscript, and appendix. From a commercial standpoint the alacrity has paid off, but events have proceeded so quickly since he shipped his manuscript off to the publisher—the Starr report was released—that Bennett no longer stands out as a lonely paragon of outrage. So much has come to light with which he could have gotten himself even more outraged! The particulars of the president's sexual depravity, his lies to the public, his ill-use of people who trusted him: all would have been excellent grist for Bennett's virtue-mill.

There is an advantage, though, to the relatively uninformed state in which Bennett had to write. Just as the Starr report is a legal brief against Bill Clinton, *The Death of Outrage* is a political brief against him. It is couched in moral terms, but Bennett's territory is the politics of morality, not morality itself. In the Starr report, the irresistibly interesting story and its details overshadow Kenneth Starr's legal argument. But there is no juicy material in *The Death of Outrage*, so that what Bennett is saying stands out in clear relief, and we can get a good hard look at it.

Bennett criticizes Clinton's defenders for participating in public discourse "in a wholly partisan spirit—while also claiming the high ground of principle." The idea of this book is that Bennett himself is going to be more high-minded, and, by implication, more intellectually rigorous. He raises the hope that he will soar above the level of talk-show and lecture-circuit ping-pong disputation and present a rich, worked-out theory of why Clinton is not fit to be president.

This works only up to a point. Bennett has organized the book in the form of summaries of the "Defense of President Clinton," followed by his response, on a series of six subjects: Sex, Character, Politics, Ken Starr, Law, and Judgment. These sound suitably elevated, but the defense-and-response format sets the tone of the discussion. Even Plato would have had a hard time scaling the philosophical heights by dint of a dialogue with James Carville. A good deal of *The Death of Outrage* consists of so's-your-old-man accusations of liberal hypocrisy and comparisons of Clinton's misdeeds to Nixon's. The discussion takes place in a universe of debater's points.

In Bennett's hands, everything the White House does is an outrage and everything that Kenneth Starr does is the act of a decent man impelled, finally, to defend his and his country's honor. For Bennett, it wasn't Starr who made presidential fellatio into the centerpiece of our public life, it was Clinton: "a sexual affair is *forced* in our face, on the front page, by the president's own irresponsible, self-indulgent conduct."

As an example of the one-directionality of Bennett's understanding, he has great fun with Hillary Clinton's "vast right-wing conspiracy" theory. He calls it "either intentionally preposterous or unintentionally paranoid," and summarizes it in a cartoonish, exaggerated way ("Its members would seem to include Monica Lewinsky, Kathleen Willey, Gennifer Flowers, former California Governor Jerry Brown....") rather than defending the work of the figures whom Mrs. Clinton was actually talking about (Richard Mellon Scaife, Lucianne Goldberg). And then, without a trace of irony, he flatly asserts, as if it is self-evidently true, that "Judge Starr's low popularity is overwhelmingly due to the fact that he is the object of a well-orchestrated and relentless smear campaign." Bennett's mode of argumentation invites the same kind of triumphantly dense response that he uses to put away the conspiratorialists in the Clinton camp: who is running the conspiracy, Jay Leno and the entire population of France? Bennett reports with horror that the independent counsel's office has been the target of leaks: in one month, the office received "almost one hundred calls from reporters [that's three calls every single day, folks!] inquiring about false and damaging accusations against its prosecutors." But the other side would never leak that kind of damaging information about the White House, of that we can be sure.

Still, Bennett has a case to make. His opening gambit is to insist that the liberals and the Clinton defenders are wrong in saying that this is just about sex. "The notion that President Clinton's sexual activity is the object of the investigation by the independent counsel is false," Bennett announces. The actual object is "violations of law and efforts to undermine constitutional government." For if there were an inquiry into a politician's private life, Bennett would not approve of it. As he writes, "public officials (like

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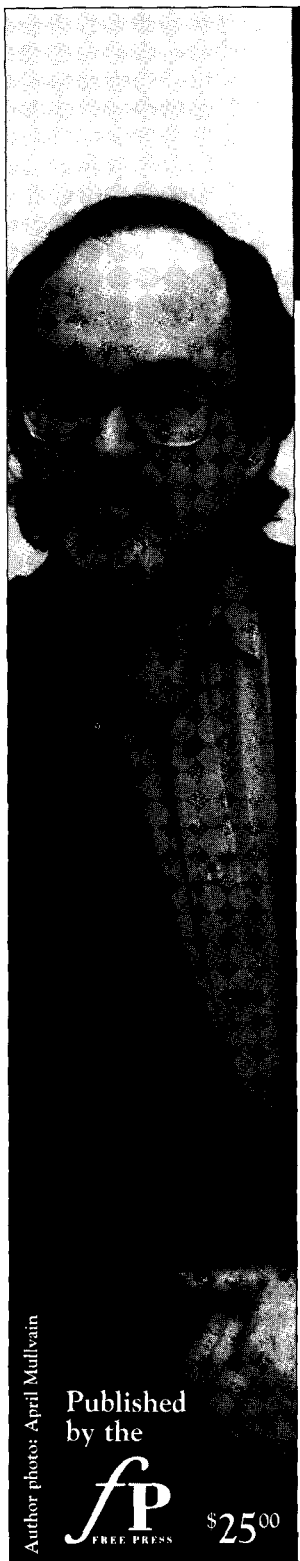
everyone else) ... deserve a legitimate zone of personal privacy."

The first problem here is that it is really quite difficult to present Starr's inquiry as being concerned solely with abuse of power. Even if we accept the Starr report on its own terms, the narrative of Clinton's career as an abuser of power does not begin until the night of October 9, 1997, when he called Monica Lewinsky and offered to help her find a job in New York. Never mind that, as abuses of power go, this one is pretty minor. Clinton's motive, according to the Starr report, was to protect himself from having his sex life explored in the Paula Jones case; a few days earlier he had been served with an interrogatory from Jones's lawyers asking about his extramarital affairs. All of Clinton's "efforts to undermine constitutional government" were actually an effort at self-defense, with the aim of protecting himself from having his career as an adulterer investigated in tendentious legal proceedings whose real aim, as he surely realized, was to use subpoena power to get dirt on him and then make it public.

Of the Starr report's eleven grounds for impeachment, eight are variations on the theme that Clinton tried to keep his affair with Lewinsky out of the purview of the Paula Jones case. *This* is the crime that Starr has been investigating all year. The three remaining grounds for impeachment have to do with Clinton's trying to evade Starr's inquiry into his evasion of the Paula Jones inquiry. Clinton's deposition in the Jones case on January 17, which lies at the heart of his lawbreaking (it provides the foundation for three of the eleven grounds for impeachment), looks an awful lot like an induced crime, rather than one independently committed and then run down by lawmen. Only a day before the deposition, the current phase of Starr's investigation began when Janet Reno gave him the go-ahead to look into the Lewinsky affair; and practically the moment the deposition ended, *Newsweek* was working up a story saying that Starr was looking into Clinton's having perjured himself. It would be hard to imagine any legal proceeding against a public official that was more about his private sexual misdeeds and less about his misconduct of official duties.

Anyway, it soon becomes apparent that Bennett's insistence that the issue is not sex is a little thin. If it were about sex, he plainly would not object. He says at one point, in a see-how-reasonable-I-am tone, "Let's agree that adultery ought not automatically disqualify a



FROM THE AUTHOR OF RADICAL SON

THE POLITICS OF BAD FAITH

THE RADICAL ASSAULT ON AMERICA'S FUTURE

BY DAVID HOROWITZ

Was it mere accident that relativism and its twin, nihilism, should become outlooks of the Left at the precise moment that its ideas were being refuted by historical events? Or was this, rather, the most efficient way to avoid the painful but necessary meanings of its past—the truth of progressives' complicity in the most terrible crimes of the century?

From chapter 1: "The Left After Communism"

It is the paradigm of "exile" that forges the false bonds between Jewish faith and revolutionary fervor. And it is the paradigm of exile in the Jewish tradition that warns us of the dangers of such messianic hopes—hopes that are gnostic and apocalyptic, that propose a self-transformation of men into angels, and that promise the establishment of paradise on earth.

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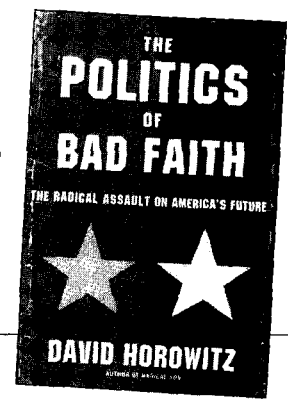

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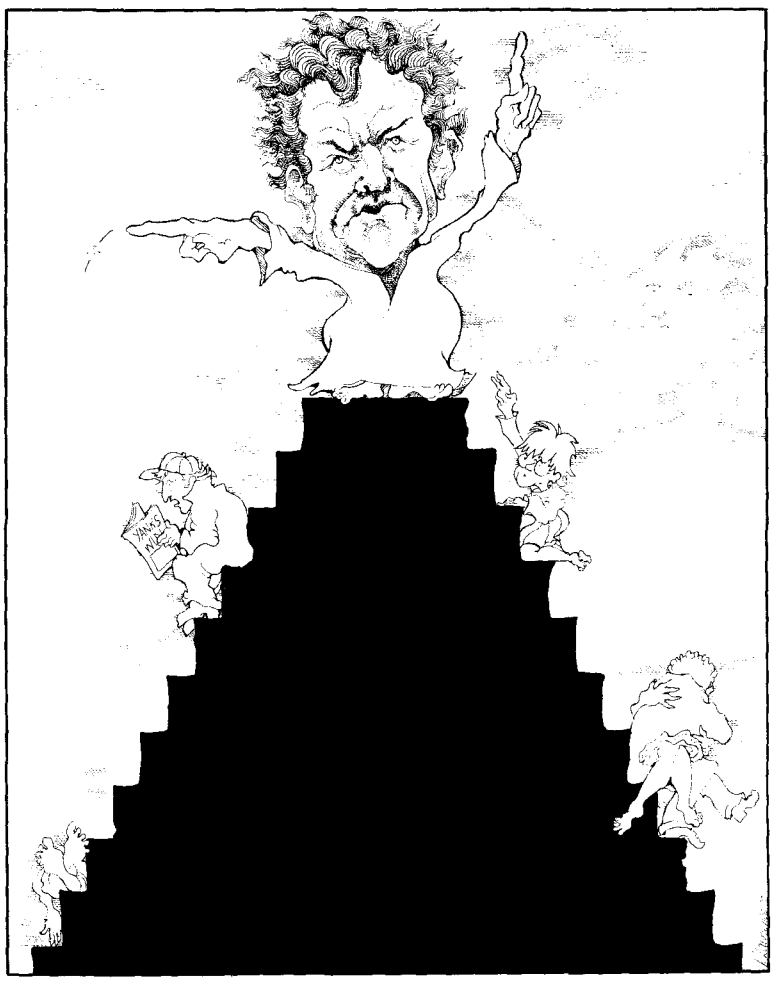
person from seeking high public office"; but the word "automatically" gives away Bennett's view that adultery should not simply be kept out of the public realm. Indeed, the opposite idea, that presidential adultery is none of the public's business, offends him deeply. "Much, perhaps most, of the public commentary about President Clinton's adulterous relationships makes them seem unimportant, trivial, of no real concern," he says disapprovingly.

Bennett ought to be razor-sharp on this point, because it is the logical key to the book. He needs a coherent theory about the relation of personal morality to governance if *The Death of Outrage* is going to rise above the level of "I am virtuous and Bill Clinton is not." When, exactly, is presidential adultery a public matter and when isn't it? What is the justification for its being a public matter? Unfortunately, Bennett does not present a consistent answer to these questions.

Indeed, I detected three distinctly different positions over the course of Bennett's book:

1. Presidential adultery becomes a public issue if the circumstances reach a threshold level of moral outrageousness. Bennett never specifies the exact location of the threshold, but he makes it clear that the "sordid sexual affair" between Clinton and Lewinsky easily exceeded it.
2. Any presidential adultery is a public issue because it is a reliable signifier of official misfeasance, at least in Clinton's case: "There is a seamless web of deceit that connects Bill Clinton's private and public life, his private failings and his public failings."
3. The president is the moral leader of the nation, as well as the administrative head of the executive branch of government. Committing adultery is a dereliction of this part of his official duties. Having "high moral standards," Bennett says, "...is obviously not his only responsibility. Nor is it his first responsibility. But it *is* a responsibility he cannot shirk." Rather than believing that the scandal is about lawbreaking and not sex, Bennett (when he is hawking this position) seems to believe that it is about sex and not lawbreaking, and so the hell what? "Interpreting the actions of a president solely though a legal prism habituates Americans to think like lawyers instead of citizens."

The passage where Bennett most clearly displays his lack of precision in stating exactly what it is that he thinks Clinton has done wrong is an extended, supposedly devastating "thought experiment" comparing Clinton's situation to Watergate. Let us imagine that a hypothetical president has a "lurid sexual relationship with a young White House intern." Now, what if, in order to prevent it from being made public, he ordered a break-in at a psychiatrist's office, had wiretaps placed on journalists' phones, and launched IRS audits and hush-money payments? What would the Clinton defenders think then?



WILLIAM BENNETT BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Bennett asks the question triumphantly; but by this time he has made the opposite of the point that he thinks he is making, by reminding us of the immense difference between Richard Nixon's use of governmental power to harass his political enemies and Bill Clinton's saying that he did not have an affair with Monica Lewinsky when he did. And then, having unwittingly made a case against what Nixon did, Bennett concludes the thought experiment by saying, out of logical left field, "Let's ... concede the obvious: the private lives of public figures can often be relevant." What the thought experiment actually demonstrates is that Bennett's dislike of Clinton is so intense that it prevents him from being able to think straight.

The reason that Bennett's parsing of Clinton's situation is so unsatisfying, I think, is not that questions of public morality are unimportant to him, but that they are overwhelmingly important to him. His writing is strongest when he is most moralistic and least rational; he achieves a thundering indignation. He was trained in philosophy and in law, but he has not carefully reasoned his way to the conclusion that Clinton should not be president. Instead he is absolutely certain, with a visceral abhorrence of Clinton every bit as powerful as the visceral abhorrence of liberals for Nixon, that it is bad for America, in a moral sense, to have Clinton as head of state. And so any weapon at hand against Clinton will do. That is why Bennett makes different, incongruent arguments over the course of his book.

Owing to the triumph of liberal relativism, the country has sunk into a parlous moral condition: this is Bennett's deepest conviction. And the terrible, tangible results are everywhere around us: "We see it on angry urban streets. In drug rehabilitation centers. In hospital emergency room admissions. In classrooms that resemble war zones. In crisis pregnancy centers. In foster homes. In divorce courts." Oddly, given the context, one of the sages Bennett chooses to quote bemoaning the hollowness of American life is John Updike, who is surely the very emblem of the idea that an adulterer can retain moral authority.

If the country had a leader whose personal behavior were exemplary, Bennett implies, the tenor of ordinary life would begin to change for the better. It

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would become finer and more stable. (Never mind that all of Bennett's alarming indices of social collapse have declined during the reign of the immoral Clinton.) Conversely, to excuse Clinton's behavior is to send out a signal that will be picked up "by aggressive young men and vulnerable young women across America."

This doctrine should at the very least occasion some careful reassurances on Bennett's part. A never-quite-directly-stated syllogism lies under the surface of *The Death of Outrage*. The major premise is that the successful state must possess moral authority. ("Without being 'judgmental,' Americans would never have put an end to slavery, outlawed child labor, emancipated women, or ushered in the civil rights movement. Nor would we have prevailed against Nazism and Soviet Communism....") The minor premise is that for the state to possess moral authority, the head of state must embody moral authority. And the conclusion, therefore, is that the personal moral stature of the president is the necessary condition for the successful functioning of the American government.

The trouble with this is that Bennett finds the fit between morality and democracy much more natural and trouble-free than it actually is. Laws are the fruit of democratic processes, because the elected representatives of the people make them; but morality, which is usually rooted in religion, exists outside of (and long predates) democracy. That is why the idea of a moral code that takes precedence over laws, even in the operations of a democratic government, is frightening. Whose moral code is it? Who gets to decide on the particulars? Once it is in place, what check is there on its power?

These are not just abstract questions from your introductory course in political theory. Clinton's affair with Lewinsky demonstrates, for Bennett, the awfulness of government without an overlay of personal morality; but surely Starr's investigation of Clinton demonstrates the perils of personal morality invested with the force of law. A recent issue of *Newsweek* casually summarized the recent phase of the Starr investigation this way: "The son of a Texas fundamentalist preacher, Starr is a moral purist who seems personally offended by lying.... Starr's deputies are less high-minded, yet just as determined to catch Clinton in a falsehood. They believe that throughout the Whitewater investigation, the White House covered up the truth. The Lewinsky case offered Starr's team the perfect opportunity to get even by setting a perjury trap."

It looks as if this comes from sources within the independent counsel's office (it has the tone of an amiable explanation); but if you think about it, the whole line of argument is shocking. Starr is personally offended by Clinton's lying, and so it is perfectly all right for him to use the power of the state—grand juries, subpoenas, and so on—to punish him for it. Starr's deputies were personally offended by Clinton's conduct in the Whitewater investigation, and so it is all right for them to get revenge by transmuting, through entrapment, an adulterous affair that evidently didn't itself bother them very much into a violation of the law, in order to put Clinton in the way of punishment by the state.

Starr actually put Clinton's redolent lie of January 26—"I want to say one thing to the American people. I want you to listen to me. I'm going to say this again: I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky"—on his list of grounds for impeachment, even though Clinton told it at a minor ceremonial event, not under oath. Even the lies of Hillary Clinton, the Cabinet, and the White House staff in their public statements about the Lewinsky affair (in other words, by implication, Clinton's private lies to them on the subject, which they were only repeating) are grounds for impeachment, according to Starr. Do we really want this logic—if it offends my moral sense, then it is illegal—to be part of the regular workings of government? Do we really want its legitimacy to go unchallenged?

Bennett does not see the danger of indistinctly blending legal authority and moral authority. Every time he makes a run at the subject of morality's place in government, he gets bollixed up, because morality is so central to him that he cannot counterbalance it with anything else in a cogent way. At one point he writes: "The brand of politics being practiced and advocated by Clinton apologists is based on no code of conduct, no reliable way of deciding what is within or without the bounds of proper political discourse and conduct. The underlying premise is that there are no moral facts, thus reducing politics to what the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche called (approvingly) the Will to Power." Once again, as in his Watergate "thought experiment," the magnificent force of his moral fervor has led him to get the point exactly wrong. For in the present situation it is morality that is giving cover to the Will to Power, tempered by no publicly agreed-upon set of rules.

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To take the position that public life ought to revolve around public issues dealt with through democratic processes hardly constitutes an abandonment of all known codes of conduct; but in the United States, investing a personal moral code with state power does indeed represent an alarming departure from the fundamentals of our tradition.

At one point in *The Death of Outrage*, Bennett announces, with more of his stagy pugnacity, that "I am going to take the bait offered by James Carville, and speak for those allegedly intolerant Puritans who have the effrontery to believe that a president's sex life is, or can be, a matter of public consequence." Making the "unfashionable" move of aligning himself with the Puritans is Bennett at his most adorable, but it is worth remembering that the Puritans were not only intolerant of lasciviousness. They also made political citizenship conditional upon membership in their church. If there is a sharp line between moralist and theocrat, William Bennett certainly has no sure sense of its location.

NICHOLAS LEMANN is national correspondent of *The Atlantic Monthly*.

Why Heidegger cannot escape Heidegger.

Being and His Time

BY MICHAEL ANDRÉ BERNSTEIN

I.

Does it really matter, in the end, what sort of man or woman produced the works of art or thought that compel our attention? Historically, the issue has been framed in many different rhetorics. In *Rameau's Nephew*, the most prescient and unsettling of the eighteenth century's speculative fictions, Diderot dramatized the long-standing debate about the ethical responsibility of a genius in the following exchange:

> He: Men of genius are only good for one thing, and apart from that, nothing. They don't know what it means to be citizens, fathers, mothers, brothers, relations, friends....
>
> I: Which would you prefer: that Racine had been a worthy person ... giving his wife a legitimate baby once a year, a good husband, good father, good uncle, good neighbor, an honest tradesman, but nothing more; or that he had been a rogue, a traitor, ambitious, envious, spiteful, but the creator of *Andromaque, Brittanicus, Iphigénie, Phèdre, Athalie*?

Today the disjunction between imaginative intelligence and moral character is a cultural commonplace, and yet we have never entirely stopped asking whether there is a point at which a basic shabbiness of soul must disfigure any works that such a person produces. A century and a half after Diderot, with his ethical understanding decisively sharpened by the Dreyfus case, Proust recast the whole question in terms whose pertinence has become increasingly evident with each new decade. So tolerant of the sexual, the financial, and the careerist derelictions of his characters, Proust insisted on a categorical difference between offenses committed for private ends and offenses perpetrated on behalf of a political evil, declaring that "we forgive the crimes of individuals, but not their participation in a collective crime."

Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil
by Rüdiger Safranski
translated by Ewald Osers
(Harvard University Press, 474 pp., $35)

All of the significant arguments invoked in "the case of Martin Heidegger"—the unpalatable but indisputable fact that one of the twentieth century's most influential and original philosophers was, for a while at least, a convinced Nazi—recapitulate either the open-minded puzzlement of Diderot's conversationalists or the finality of Proust's austere verdict. And yet our familiarity with the various positions that have been taken about Heidegger's politics, the ease with which we can usually deduce the main contours of successive new accounts from a few initial sentences, has not exhausted the quarrel. Indeed, so heated and prolonged a controversy about the degree of connection between the philosophy, the politics, and the personal character of a reclusive man, most of whose life was spent as a university professor, who occupied no important political office, and who scarcely ever left his native province, let alone his country, is more surprising than any of the specific interpretations of that relationship. Not only is the bibliography of secondary studies devoted to Heidegger already by far the largest of any twentieth-century philosopher, but the disproportion is actually increasing.

The contentiousness of the debate about Heidegger, and the participation in it of important figures from almost every continent and perspective, is unprecedented; and to dismiss the phenomenon as mere journalistic chatter is itself just a manifestation of intellectual carelessness. The real philistinism, I think, is to be found in the view that there is nothing really important at stake, that nothing Heidegger did or wrote apart from his strictly philosophical works should have any bearing on how we respond to those ideas and those texts, and that his own allegiances and commitments are no more than ephemeral side-issues about which it is pointless to speculate since they are irrelevant to any serious consideration of his significance as a thinker.

To the extent that we are willing to take Heidegger seriously at all, we cannot repudiate questions about his moral and political choices by arguing that we are largely unconcerned about the personal virtue or political affiliations of philosophers from earlier centuries, and so we ought to approach Heidegger with the same diffidence. Admittedly, episodes such as Plato's ill-fated involvement with Dionysius II of Syracuse or Hegel's delight in being decorated by Frederick William III of Prussia play little role in our evaluation of either philosopher's work. But our relationship to Heidegger is different, and this is so for reasons that his own thinking best explains.

Admirers such as Hannah Arendt have explicitly and apologetically compared Heidegger's involvement with National Socialism to Plato's two visits to the tyrant of Syracuse, but it is fundamental to Heidegger's teaching that we are essentially creatures of time who exist in a specific historical moment, not in some abstract, atemporal realm; and it is from within our own temporal horizon that our primary judgments are always made. Now, our knowledge of the Nazi death camps is a crucial element of the world into which we ourselves have been *geworfen*, or "thrown," to use

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Heidegger's charged term. Surely it is senseless to expect that we should somehow bracket the pressures and the claims of that grim temporal knowledge when we reflect on Heidegger's own writings. I suppose that one may imagine a future when Nazism is as distant a historical memory as the Syracusan politics of Plato's day, and then, perhaps, the relationship between Heidegger's political commitments and his philosophy will be of interest only to the specialists in such questions. But we are not living in the future yet.

Moreover, the distinction between the canonical texts that supposedly constitute Heidegger's authentic reflections and a secondary body of ephemeral writings that are merely "private" expressions and hence have no bearing on his real work as a thinker—a distinction that is routinely insisted upon by his advocates—remains highly problematic. At the very least, such a dichotomy betrays one of the cornerstones of Heidegger's own thought. No philosopher has done more than Heidegger to undermine the stability of precisely these kinds of conventional categories. One of his enduring legacies is to have greatly extended our awareness of what can ground a philosophical discourse. Many of his own most searching meditations are careful teasings-out of the theoretical richness of such philosophically unexpected subjects as a single fragment of Anaximander, a painting by van Gogh, or a few lyrics by Hölderlin or Rilke. In light of such a practice, it is hard to justify deciding ahead of time, and merely on the basis of genre or occasion, which of Heidegger's own words should count as his legitimate philosophical legacy and which can be ignored as inconsequential. It is even more dubious to rely on such distinctions to settle the problem of the moral accountability of his thinking.

In fact, Heidegger is remarkable for the persistence with which he clung to his belief in the fundamental validity of his political and cultural notions, and for his insistence on grounding those notions in his larger philosophical project. Nothing in his writings suggests that Heidegger sought to distinguish between his texts according to whether they treated contemporary historical and political conditions or more strictly traditional philosophical problems, nor did he classify them according to their occasion and their audience.

It is true that Heidegger disavowed or reinterpreted away politically compromising documents from the Nazi era when they jeopardized his postwar career. The most notorious of these inconvenient pronouncements were his Rector's Address at Freiburg on May 27, 1933, on "The Self-Assertion of the German University," and his "Appeal to German Students" a few months later, which included this exhortation: "Let not axioms or 'ideas' be the rules of your Being. The Führer himself and alone is the present and future German reality and its law." Immediately upon reading the Rector's Address, Benedetto Croce described it as "stupid and servile at the same time"; and in subsequent years, Heidegger tried to distance himself from it as much as possible.

But there were equally problematic statements that were never completely erased, and the texts in which these assertions appear must figure in any listing, no matter how tendentiously selected, of Heidegger's principal writings. Thus, in 1953, when he published *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, based on lectures he first delivered in 1935, Heidegger made a point of retaining a sentence about "the inner truth and greatness of this movement," referring to National Socialism. He even specified wherein that inner truth and greatness lay: "namely, the encounter between planetary technology and modern man." Since that "encounter" is perhaps the most powerful and abiding of all Heidegger's postwar concerns, to link its theorization to an unrealized potential within Nazism, and to do so eight years after the collapse of Hitler's Reich, shows a greater steadfastness in Heidegger's political vision than his acolytes are willing to admit.

Similarly, in the Bremen lectures of 1949, which became the basis for his major essay on "The Question Concerning Technology," Heidegger makes clear that in his view the extermination of European Jewry was merely one more instantiation of the abuse of technology—lamentable, no doubt, but no more important or grievous than the mechanization of agriculture. All of technology's destructive effects are treated as equivalent manifestations of a deeper crisis, and the refusal to distinguish hierarchically between these effects is entirely deliberate and polemical, part of a theoretical claim about modernity that Heidegger never ceased reiterating:

> Agriculture is now a mechanized food industry, in essence the same as the manufacture of corpses in the gas chambers and extermination camps, the same as the blockade and starvation of the countryside, the same as the production of the hydrogen bombs.

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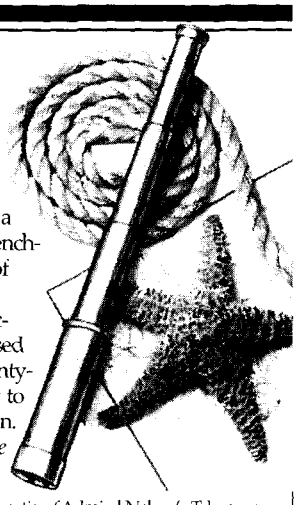

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This programmatic leveling of differences is characteristic of his pronouncements on cultural and political questions throughout his writing. It occurs in his best-known works as regularly as in his occasional pieces, and it is as much a part of his philosophical legacy as the analysis of human temporality and human care in *Being and Time*. Habermas has usefully labeled this tendency "abstraction by essentialization"; and it is worth remarking how little is required by way of argumentation to perform this "essentialization." Especially striking is how the strategic use of the phrase "in essence the same as" does all the work of uniting diverse events into a single manifold, without ever specifying what common features confirm the fundamental equivalence of all the elements on his list.

It was precisely this technique that enabled Heidegger to declare in 1935 that America and Stalinist Russia are "metaphysically speaking, the same." Heidegger typically asserts the existence of a deeper stratum of truth or reality that determines all of the various manifestations of the surface, and it is from the perspective of that primal, grounding reality that the epiphenomena which we naïvely regard as incommensurate can be seen as interchangeable.

It is also from this foundational, all-determining first reality that Heidegger's speech implicitly claims to issue, and the story that it wants to tell is nothing less than the historical fate of Being itself. It is a discourse whose sweep can thrill or repel, depending in part on the listener's receptivity to the glamour of metaphysical melodrama, but it is not one that can plausibly be differentiated into such conventional and discrete categories as politics, aesthetics, and philosophy.

II.

The case debated by the interlocutors in Diderot's dialogue is, in one vital aspect, simpler than the questions raised by Heidegger's life and work. Diderot speculates about a genius who was also a thoroughly wicked man, but there is no suggestion of any direct imaginative entailment linking the immortal works to the immorality of the artist who produced them. The ambition, the envy, and the spite attributed to Racine's personality are not interpreted, as they might have been, as imprinted anywhere in his plays, let alone as having been crucial to the creation of Racine's psychologically tortured and self-divided characters. The man and the work are regarded, rather, as mutually independent, and the quarrel turns on how much we should let our knowledge of the artist's personal failings affect our pleasure in his works.

In this sense, Richard Rorty's extraordinary biological analogy does little more than offer a more modern-sounding version of Diderot's argument. Rorty wants us to judge Heidegger's philosophical work entirely apart from his politics, because "being an original philosopher is like being an original mathematician ... it is the result of some neural kink that occurs independently of other kinks." But the whole pertinence of such a sharp demarcation is itself one of the chief areas of contention in the debate about Heidegger. As Habermas points out, "what is at issue here is not the relation between the *life* and the work of Heidegger, since that formulation begs the crucial question whether Heidegger's political views should be considered part of his work."

One way to bring Habermas's point into sharper focus is to consider how different the stakes are when questions are raised about the political behavior of a gifted conductor such as Herbert von Karajan or a singer of unequaled musical intelligence such as Elisabeth Schwarzkopf. Immediately after the war, both artists were accused of complicity with Nazism, and both refuted the charge by claiming a fundamental indifference toward politics. I am not concerned here to intervene in the controversies about either musician's life. I want only to point out that it has proven much easier to separate artistic accomplishments like von Karajan's or Schwarzkopf's from their politics than to draw the same lines in the case of a philosopher.

One may choose, for a multitude of understandable reasons, not to purchase a recording by a musician suspected of having been a Nazi, but it would be much harder to establish the more general case that their performances necessarily manifest their political sympathies. But when Heidegger describes his thinking as a "dialogue with the world's destiny," and offers a diagnosis of our perilous historical situation predicated on his "grasping the basic features of the universal technological age now beginning," then the question of whether or not his political views are an inextricable part of his philosophical teaching is unavoidable. As the German philosopher Otto Pöggeler puts it, "whoever [wants] ... to appropriate initiatives and to learn from him must realize that in the 1930s, Heidegger himself placed the decision about the truth of Being as he sought it in a political context." More generally, indeed, the functions of philosophical discourse in our culture differ essentially from those of mathematics or music, and so, too, do the questions that we may legitimately ask about its political and moral foundation.

To acknowledge the legitimacy of the question should not imply that one has already decided how it must be answered. In practice, though, the movement from raising the issue to resolving it has tended to be disconcertingly swift. Although there have been a number of scrupulous studies about the relationship between Heidegger's politics and the rest of his philosophical work, especially Richard Wolin's *The Politics of Being: The Political Thought of Martin Heidegger* (1990) and Berel Lang's *Heidegger's Silence* (1996), from which I have taken the following examples, many otherwise intellectually discriminating figures have shown little hesitation in responding as though the case were self-evident. Early in 1960, for example, Gilbert Ryle, who had favorably reviewed *Being and Time* when it first appeared, straightforwardly concluded that Heidegger's deficiencies of character are sufficient to make his philosophical writing necessarily second-rate. Ryle's verdict was simple: "Bad man. Can't be a good philosopher." Hans-Georg Gadamer settles the question with equal ease, from the opposite side. To Gadamer, the solution is "simple" as soon as one recognizes that Heidegger was "the greatest of thinkers, but the smallest of men."

For neither Ryle nor Gadamer does the answer to the question about the relationship between Heidegger's life and Heidegger's philosophy require any strenuous reflection or extended argumentation. Neither Ryle's laconic dryness nor Gadamer's cozy "simplicity" engages the issues in a satisfying way. Even less persuasive, moreover, are debates conducted largely in hand-me-down versions of Heidegger's own idiolect, as though his vocabulary and his syntax could be directly imported into comments on him without flooding the discourse. Especially in France, and in certain circles in the American academy, the controversy about Heidegger has also been merged, to no one's advantage, with the logically and historically separate issue of the ethical status of deconstruction.

Reading these debates almost makes comprehensible Heidegger's odd boast that "when they [the French] begin to think, they speak German. They assure me they could not manage with their language." No doubt Jean-François Lyotard had this kind of intellectual and linguistic genealogy in mind when

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he described the "scandal" that arose after the publication, in 1987, of Victor Farias's *Heidegger and Nazism* as "a French affair." But whatever the extent of deconstruction's indebtedness to and difference from Heidegger, and no matter how simultaneously preening and prickly most of the responses by Derrida and his followers to the Heidegger controversy, a proper assessment of Derridean philosophy cannot depend directly on what sense we make of the relationship between Heidegger's political and his philosophical work.

Even if we suspend any consideration of Heidegger's often shabby personal behavior, and limit the inquiry strictly to the relationship between his publicly expressed political views and his philosophy, it is rare to find any intellectually significant dialogue between his defenders and his critics. For Adorno, Heidegger's thinking is unmistakably "fascist right down to its innermost components," while Rorty is equally convinced that "Heidegger was only accidentally a Nazi." Both descriptions strike me as trivial. It is no clearer how Adorno's description might apply to the entirety of Heidegger's writings than it is how someone who took himself, his ideas, and his public persona as seriously as Heidegger did could have been only an "accidental" Nazi.

If Adorno is right, then by now Heidegger's thinking would likely have fallen into the same oblivion as the works of such philosophical champions of National Socialism as Alfred Bäumler, Ernst Krieck, Erich Jaensch, or Arnold Gehlen. They, at any rate, had no doubt about the differences between Heidegger's philosophy and their own. Jaensch, it is worth noting, described Heidegger in the following terms to senior Nazi officials in charge of education:

> Heidegger's thought is characterized by the same obsession with hairsplitting distinctions as Talmudic thought. That is why it holds such an extraordinary fascination for Jews, persons of Jewish ancestry and others with a similar mental make-up.

Yet to adopt Rorty's analysis, and to conclude that there is only a fortuitous connection between Heidegger's philosophy and his pronouncements championing National Socialism, risks trivializing the entirety of his project. Such a position has, as its unacknowledged presupposition, precisely the narrow, professional understanding of philosophical thinking that it was perhaps Heidegger's greatest single ambition to overthrow. There are defenses of a thinker that are just as damaging as any condemnation.

III.

Rüdiger Safranski's book is the most thorough and even-handed biographical study of Heidegger to date, and it supersedes earlier works such as Farias's study or Hugo Ott's *Martin Heidegger: A Political Life*. Even if one disagrees with many of Safranski's specific judgments—I am especially unconvinced by his irritable insistence that Heidegger's silence about the Holocaust is not a moral and theoretical stumbling block—his scrupulous research and his general fair-mindedness always provide readers with sufficient information to reach their own conclusions. Most of all, Safranski knows how to tell the story of a life spent largely thinking and writing, and how to make clear that the story itself matters.

Heidegger's preface to his lectures on Aristotle limited the biographical information that he considered worth noting to this sparse sequence: "He was born, worked, and died." Elsewhere, though, he insisted that "everything great arises from man's rootedness in his homeland and tradition," and he repeatedly emphasized the shaping influence of his native region on his thinking. Like his favorite poets and dramatists, Heidegger placed tremendous emphasis on the revelatory potential of the local, and he felt only contempt for anything that bore traces of cosmopolitanism: "Does not the flourishing of any genuine work depend upon its roots in a native soil?" Owing in part to considerations such as these, he declined invitations, in 1930 and in 1933, to leave Freiburg for a more prestigious professorship in Berlin.

Heidegger was born in 1889 in Messkirch and he died there in 1976. The town was only a short distance from Freiburg, where Heidegger first enrolled as a Catholic theology student in 1909. Even when he discontinued his clerical training and turned to logic, natural sciences, and phenomenology, Heidegger changed supervisors, not universities. Indeed, with the exception of five years at Marburg, between 1923 and 1928, almost the entirety of Heidegger's adult life was spent in Freiburg, first as a student, then as Edmund Husserl's assistant from 1918 to 1923, and finally, beginning in 1928, as Husserl's successor.

Safranski opens his book with a helpful four-page chronology of Heidegger's life. Not surprisingly, it reads largely like a catalogue of publications and talks, with a notable meagerness of dramatic incidents. The one decisive exception to a life of routine academic ambitions and rhythms—Heidegger's openly pro-Nazi activities, which began when he joined the party on May 1, 1933, dominated his brief, unsuccessful tenure as Rector of the University from May 1933 to April 1934, and were still in evidence as late as his lecture visit to Rome in 1936—stands out precisely for being so uncharacteristic.

Heidegger grew "disillusioned" with Nazism when it became obvious that the Party had no intention of making him its philosophical mentor. On the contrary, the Nazi hierarchy regarded him with suspicion for having developed "his own private National Socialism" (*Privat-Nazionalsozialismus*), which differed in significant ways from the official version. But even then, although he stopped speaking out on contemporary political issues, he continued to pay his party membership dues until the end of the war. He limited whatever reservations he might have had to the Aesopian form of a series of lectures on Nietzsche.

There is remarkably little sign in Heidegger's personal life of the "resolve" that his thinking endows with so much prestige. A kind of prudential caution marks his whole existence, and nothing, not even the passionate love affair that he began in 1924 with his eighteen-year-old student Arendt, is allowed to imperil his academic career or to undermine the domestic tranquillity that his wife, Elfride, took care to provide for him.

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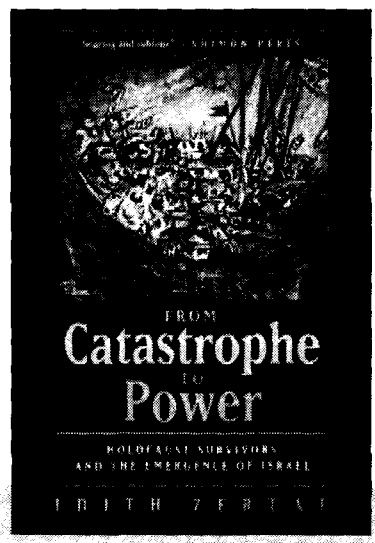

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Hardhat Limbo

Seventeen men and boys in shiny yellow hardhats, bunched in the rear
stall of Dodge Pickup, bob over the bumps—their heads lolling
in sync like a jiggly bouquet of human dandelion blooms.
The driver floors the throttle in low gear: roars—
inchingly—up the steep grade. Halfway
to a hilltop, great swirls
of rain, little cyclones of gush, come
whipping down on the truck, and the laggard crew
howl in chorus, halting the transport car on the spot—
as if they'd whunked into a deer or calf, so sudden a braking
and tire burn of rubber. The workers cheer the foreman driver, who

starts to coast backwards down the hill. *No work today*, they shriek
with glee. *Hard rains gonna fall, gonna fall*, they rasp & groan
in Bob Dylan guttural croaks. Rain puddles would loosen
their road tars & wall mortars, spoiling the seal.
Ah, they're all of one mind, so prone
to hot-tail it back home
for sweet holiday. The man at the wheel
coasts downhill and brakes in lunges, reversing
his gears, at last, as if waiting out the quick-switch
of weather. And no sooner does he speedup the backout, all rain
quits, cloud overcast cracks open like an axe-riven coconut, and Sun

pours forth its Golden Milk. Back into forward gear, zip-zip, cranks
the bossman to a fizzle of heartsick jeers from his men. Stolen
holiday! *Lost, O lost*, they bleat, a flock of betrayed
sheep. They scale hill steeps once more, leveling
out on the top of the rise, and worse
rain squall bears down—
to ecstatic hurrahs of the men, another
truckload of crew bringing up the rear . . . Both halt
and reverse. Rain whirligigs to shine. And a tug-of-war
between work and play resumes, yellow hardhats trapped in limbo,
hollers of joy fade to grunts: no play, no work. Six hour cul-de-sac. . . .

LAURENCE LIEBERMAN

In *The Man Without Qualities*, Robert Musil laments that "unfortunately nothing is so difficult to represent by literary means as a man thinking." Considering how few conventionally gripping personal events there were in Heidegger's life, a similar thought must have occurred to Safranski. His solution, and it seems to me the only plausible one, is to devote over three-quarters of the biography to a series of non-technical but impressively lucid summaries of Heidegger's writings. Safranski, who has also written biographies of Schopenhauer and E.T.A. Hoffmann, has a good instinct for the vital center of a complicated argument, and he is especially skillful at showing the connections between Heidegger's philosophical trajectory and the changing intellectual and political climate in Germany.

This biography does not flinch from its subject. Safranski does not sidestep any of the repellent personal characteristics that marked Heidegger's whole life, including his persistent tendency after the war to lie about his Nazism, his callous ingratitude toward all of his early benefactors, his readiness to denounce rivals and out-of-favor colleagues to the Nazi educational hierarchy. He seems to have been a monstrously self-absorbed man: he could bemoan even the most minor personal setbacks to a loyal disciple such as Elisabeth Blochmann at the very moment when, as a half-Jew, she was being forced to abandon her academic career and flee Germany. Yet Safranski avoids the kind of reductionism, the "hanging judge" tone, that mars Farias's book, and his criticisms are all the more persuasive for it.

Still, Safranski lets potentially interesting questions go by without probing as forcefully as one might wish: say, the disjunction between Heidegger's cautious personal self-protectiveness and his heroic self-representation. Heidegger casts his thinking in a rhetoric of epochal struggles and decisive turning-points. When he uses terms such as "resolution," "boldness," and "daring," it is never entirely clear whether they refer to intellectual traits or to qualities of character and temperament, or perhaps to both. The rhetoric suggests that there is a link between philosophical and personal "resoluteness," but offers no explanation of how that link arises or functions.

There is a note of compensatory self-aggrandizement to Heidegger's rhetoric, an intellectual's longing for the glamour of the combatant who risks his life for a cause. Indeed, a part of the seductiveness of Nazism for German intellectuals was its promise to make their theoretical labor part of a militant national adventure. No doubt that same rhetoric helps account for some of Heidegger's continuing appeal to a contemporary professorate whose politics certainly differ from his, but who are eager to regard their own work in similarly melodramatic terms.

Like Freud and Wittgenstein, Heidegger was able to endow the very enterprise of thinking with an element of personal, as well as intellectual, risk. At a time of deepening world crisis, when Being itself is in danger of being forgotten, he holds out the hope that a great philosopher may appear, a "hero" who has the charisma to become "a spur for others, so that philosophizing awakens in them" sufficient to combat the global triumph of technology and nihilism. Heidegger may have dismissed the intellectual pertinence of merely biographical stories about the lives of earlier philosophers, but acquiring the charismatic authority of "*Dasein*'s hero" was central to his own conception of his task.

The effort not to appear like an ordinary teacher of philosophy was both instinctive and calculated. Heidegger looked for ways to endow all of his actions with an aura of the extraordinary and the disruptive. His thinking was to be received as an eruption of some primal force, radically different in kind from anything produced by his fellow philosophers. The examples of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, both of whom wrote their major works in isolation, were crucial to Heidegger, and many of his idiosyncrasies were part of an effort to appropriate the outsider's authenticity of his predecessors while himself remaining securely within the German university establishment. The thrilling rhetoric in which he urged his listeners to admit the "inner terror . . . that every mystery carries with it and that gives *Dasein* its greatness" until the very

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ground they stand on "is turned into an abyss" belongs to the same constellation of talismanic props as the stylized Swabian peasant outfits, the retreats to his famous cottage at Todtnauberg in the Black Forest, and his deliberately antiquated spelling (*Seyn*) of central concept-words (*Sein*). The teacher as well as the teaching must be seen as dwelling in the kind of primal solitude indispensable for the emergence of a redemptively new way of thinking.

For Heidegger, the redemptively new was also the most archaic, a bringing back into the light of forgotten origins and first questions. His favorite term for this kind of thinking was "primordial," and it demanded finding a "path back into the historical foundations of thought ... to think through questions unasked before or since the Greeks." The ambition to be the most primordial thinker and to "preserve the force of the most elementary words" was fundamental for Heidegger and only intensified as he grew older. It is in many ways an odd ambition, especially for someone whose work contains such searching reflections on human temporality and the historicity of Being. Yet the rhetoric of primordiality saturates not only his own texts, but also the descriptions of his most ardent admirers. Here, for example, is how Arendt praised her former teacher and lover on his eightieth birthday:

> The gale that blows through Heidegger's thinking—like that which still, after thousands of years, blows to us from Plato's work—is not of our century. It comes from the primordial, and what it leaves behind is something perfect which, like everything perfect, falls back into the primordial.

It is hard not to be discomfited by praise so overwrought. But to describe Heidegger in terms of a quest for "the primordial" is less eccentric than it appears. The urge to recapture the intensity and the energy of first things, to find in the origins of Western self-understanding new instigations for the present, is one of the century's dominant imaginative impulses; and its effects are traceable throughout the art and the theory of high modernism. Think not just of Joyce's *Ulysses*, but also of the beginning of Pound's *Cantos* with its translation of Book XI of the *Odyssey*, the *Nekyiai* or descent to the Underworld, thought to be the oldest portion of Homer's epic. Pound renders Homer's lines into an English meter derived from alliterative Anglo-Saxon verse. The two primordial origins of English poetry are thus concretely invoked and "made new" at the very outset of Pound's modern verse epic. And Freud, too, thought of himself as founding a new science whose objective was to find a way back to the primordial, all-explaining origin, initially of an individual's psyche, and later, in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920) and *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1929-30), of human culture as a whole.

IV.

Heidegger despised modernism in all its manifestations, and he summarily dismissed modern literature as "predominantly destructive"; but *Being and Time*, which appeared in 1927, is a perfect example of the new, heterogeneous form, sometimes called "the modernist masterpiece," that cuts across conventional genre divisions. *Being and Time* appeared in the same decade as *Ulysses*, the first sections of *The Cantos*, Rilke's *Duino Elegies*, Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Berg's *Wozzeck*, much of Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*, as well as several of the major texts in Freud's *Standard Edition*. Like them, *Being and Time* explicitly presents itself as simultaneously the culmination of a lengthy tradition and a radical departure from its predecessors.

The book's title already makes clear the sweep of its ambition. In this book, as Safranski puts it, everything is at stake. Its prologue admonishes us that we have forgotten what Being is, and we have even forgotten this forgetting, so that the task ahead, like Proust's or Freud's, is to tell the story of an abysmal loss and the partial, difficult struggle of recapturing what has been forgotten. Like Joyce or Rilke, Heidegger flaunts a dazzling set of word-coinings and new concepts, reinventing philosophical prose at the level of the individual syllable as well as the whole paragraph and chapter.

Most importantly, *Being and Time*, like all of Heidegger's important writings and like many of the modernist masterpieces, is a continuous affirmation of the power of the exceptional instant; and there is also a corresponding contempt for the insignificance, even the perniciousness, of such prosaic longings as personal happiness or social amelioration. What matters are the moments of ecstatic rupture, the shattering of the quotidian rhythms and the banal regularities of ordinary human existence. We are thrown into a world of others, but their speech is the idle chatter, the *Gerede*, in which our authenticity is drowned. Amid their babbling, we no longer even notice that Being itself has been silenced.

"Being-lost into They" is Heidegger's chilling description of routinized social existence, in which whatever becomes public is necessarily degraded because a plurality of voices reduces hierarchic truth to mere opinion. "Publicness," he writes, "is insensitive to every difference of level and of genuineness." Most of our existence is spent in a publicness that is really a fundamental self-alienation, a life "living out of itself" for which Heidegger coins the term "ruinance" (*Ruinanz*), with its implications of a catastrophic fall into inauthenticity and forgetfulness.

Although he explicitly tried to deny its theological provenance, the language of fallenness and the idea that "factual life" is nothing but a falling away from the plenitude of Being bear clear traces of Heidegger's former religious studies. But now it is up to the thinker and the poet, not the priest, to awaken us to our dire situation. In such an awakening, there is no rescue from the fall, no ultimate redemption or link to a timeless eternity; there is only a heightened awareness of our own time-bound and care-riddled existence.

As with Proustian recollection, the grounding faith in *Being and Time* is that, when we truly awaken to an understanding of our transience and contingency, the facts of our existence will not have changed in any externally noticeable way, but our inner stance toward them will be utterly transformed. For Heidegger, philosophy begins when we are courageous enough to "let nothingness encounter us," and by doing so allow the question of Being to arise for us. Like Wallace Stevens's Snow Man, the resolute Heideggerian consciousness stands in the midst of existence without requiring the consolations of transcendence or fixed certainties,

> And, nothing himself, beholds
> Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is.

A complex network of interrelated binary oppositions structures Heidegger's texts: the division between authentic and inauthentic existence, between the single, resolute human being and the anonymous "They" who make up the public realm, between Time experienced as resolution, anxiety, and care and Time experienced as mere mechanical succession. The famous existential analysis of *Dasein* is always pitched *in extremis*, because that is viewed as the only possible mode for a meaningful life. In *Being and Time*, it is *Angst* (translated as "anxiety" by Macquarrie and Robinson, although "dread," in Kierkegaard's sense, would be more accurate), and never joy, or desire, or love, that awakens us to ask about the meaning of Being. For Heidegger, to possess the "courage for anxiety" is the first and most impor-

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tant step to experiencing ourselves and the world authentically; and confronted with the enormity of that task, ordinary human needs or moral distinctions lose their significance.

It is haunting how often Heidegger turned his back on the most promising directions his own thought had opened up. *Being and Time* contains a critique of the objectification of ordinary lived experience that is unparalleled in any other philosopher of the twentieth century. Heidegger shows how the rejection of the everyday world, and the insistence on a transcendental foundation for one's beliefs, "de-experiences" experience and "de-worlds" the world as we actually encounter it. In the hands of someone less enthralled by the revelatory power of the extreme, these arguments might have led to a philosophically rich comprehension of the value of the prosaic.

For, unlike logicians or ordinary language philosophers, Heidegger wants to analyze words taking into account their historicity, not just their immediate—and transitory—usage. He seeks, that is, to restore to language its proper historical density and to give pre-theoretical experience its proper attention and value. But his dismissal of the worth of an "inauthentic" life is perfectly mirrored in his lack of interest in any use of language except by one of his constellation of geniuses. His disregard for the communal, collectively acquired meaning of words vitiates the theoretical and ethical advantage that his acute historical awareness might have provided.

For Heidegger, it is only how Heraclitus and Sophocles, or Nietzsche and Hölderlin, used words that is interesting, not the language as it was employed by the inhabitants of a classical Greek *polis* or by ordinary nineteenth-century Germans. Nothing is more alien to Heidegger than the idea that the community of speech-users throughout a culture's linguistic history has helped to shape the words that the great poets employ. Quite the contrary. For Heidegger, the community as such has nothing substantive to contribute to the poet's words, since it is these alone that create "the essential disposition [*Grundstimmung*], that is, the truth of the *Dasein* of a *Volk*."

In a strong sense, Heidegger implies that there is really no reason why anyone except the great poet and his philosopher-explicator should speak at all. Since their words already contain everything of value in the culture, the addition of lesser voices would only drown out the plenitude of the original utterance. The great thinkers and the great poets speak to and for one another from the solitary heights of their genius; and their speech is what Heidegger will call the history of Being. The number of non-philosophers Heidegger regards as participating in this conversation is astonishingly small. No musicians are included at all, only van Gogh among painters, scarcely any prose fiction writers, and barely half a dozen poets.

Still, perhaps owing to the very narrowness of his imaginative range, Heidegger listens to the thinkers whom he venerates with an often exemplary attentiveness. No philosopher, not even Nietzsche, devoted more exegetical brilliance to analyzing the philosophical significance of poetry. When other philosophers cite literary texts at all, they almost invariably do so for the purpose of illustration, or to find a more elegant way of stating ideas that they have already formulated independently. There is no suggestion that the work of art itself has fundamentally helped to determine the direction of their philosophical argument. For Heidegger, however, the words of the poets are not merely illustrative, they are actually generative of his ideas.

And yet, for all the conceptual richness and the moments of genuine illumination, Heidegger's dialogue with his chosen poet and thinker is a conversation from which the rest of us are categorically excluded. Finally the self-enclosedness of his thought makes even the most searching speech shrill.

V.

In its original German version, Safranski's book was called *Ein Meister aus Deutschland: Heidegger und seine Zeit* ("A Master from Germany: Heidegger and His Time"). For whatever ill-conceived reason, Harvard University Press has chosen to rename it *Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil*. By doing so, it not only replaced the direct allusion to Paul Celan's famous refrain "Death is a Master from Germany" with a luridly sub-Nietzschean echo; it also excised the subtle correction that the modest phrase "His Time" brings to the absolutism of Heidegger's all-encompassing claim crystallized in the title *Being and Time*.

In 1929, at a famous colloquium in Davos two years after *Being and Time* confirmed his preeminence in German philosophy, Heidegger engaged in a widely followed public debate with Ernst Cassirer. Cassirer represented the kind of cosmopolitan humanism that Heidegger despised. It was against the beleaguered liberal tradition in European thought that Heidegger declared that "man exists at the peak of his own possibilities only at a very few moments." Only a very few men, he believed, have the inner resolution to welcome those moments. If Heidegger's earlier writings still addressed concerns shared by ordinary human beings, after the Davos encounter Heidegger's work increasingly restricted itself to a meditation on the thinkers and the poets whose texts are a record of their existence at those peak moments. With the rest of humankind, he will, for the most part, no longer seriously concern himself. Their longing for security and contentment is seen as just another sinister symptom of a massive, unheeded catastrophe, the *Seinsvergessenheit* or forgetfulness of Being that has become so rooted it may no longer be reversible.

Only the intensification of the sense of *Dasein* really matters. Nothing reveals more clearly Heidegger's roots in German Romanticism than this radical promotion of intensity. Already in 1756, Hamann had proclaimed: "Do either nothing or everything; the mediocre, the moderate, is repellent to me: I prefer an extreme." Heidegger's schism between authentic existence and inauthentic existence is only the most seductive philosophical elaboration of the anti-prosaic dictates of the counter-Enlightenment.

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A messianic leader such as Hitler, who claimed to incarnate the inwardness and the authenticity of the entire German people, and who promised to mobilize the whole *Volk* for a great world-transforming mission, drew upon the same charged Romantic themes. The fact that Nazism won Heidegger's allegiance is not particularly surprising, especially since its volitionalist rhetoric and its conception of the state in the image of a work of art seemed to emphasize some of his own most cherished concepts.

In the end, however, the moral danger of Heidegger's thinking is independent of the particular political movement in which he temporarily placed his hopes. Had there been no Third Reich, or had Heidegger never spoken a word championing it, Heideggerian philosophy would be just as vulnerable to an ethical criticism.

This criticism was articulated with succinct precision by the late historian of ideas Amos Funkenstein. He premised his objection to Heidegger on the prosaicist assumption that "human life and the incommensurable value of each individual" must be regarded as absolute. "From an ethical point of view," Funkenstein observed, "every life is authentic, a value in and of itself, not interchangeable with any other human life, a mode *sui generis*." But respecting "the integrity and worthiness of each concrete individual life, however lived" requires that one reject the fundamental Heideggerian notion of an unbridgeable chasm between authentic and inauthentic life, and the attendant belief that it is only the experience of a "crisis ... [which] 'calls' man to his true self."

Thus the most severe criticism of Heidegger's thinking need not base itself upon his explicit political allegiances at all. It is by regarding the undramatic, quotidian moments of lived experience as significant in their own right, and not merely as symptoms of "ruinance" and "boredom," that one may challenge his philosophy at its core. The very possibility that an ordinary life lived in ordinary circumstances might have its own integrity and its own value is precisely what Heidegger's thinking precludes. He defines existence in such a way as to banish from it most actual forms and practices of human conduct, and effectively delegitimates almost all individual lives, excluding them, except as purely negative, destructive forces, from the history of Being.

Contrary to the basic insight of *Being and Time* that the emergence and the concealment of Being is a temporal process, Heidegger more typically character-

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Prospects for the Middle East Peace Process

What is the likelihood of its ending successfully?

There seems to be much concern, especially in United States government circles, that the so-called peace process has reached an impasse and that it may be ultimately endangered. The fault for this is generally attributed to the Israelis and especially to the alleged "intransigence" of Israel's prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu.

What are the facts?

Promises unkept—agreements broken. Yasser Arafat made promises that he obviously never had any intention of fulfilling—the principal being the promise to rescind the infamous covenant of the PLO, which unequivocally calls for the destruction of Israel. Also, the PLO has taken no measures to curb terrorist activity, which was Israel's primary concern and consideration in agreeing to the far-reaching concessions of Oslo. In fact, the Palestinian Authority (P.A.) continues to shelter well-known members of terrorist groups and, more often than not, to enlist them in their so-called police force. This "police force" is now estimated to be over 50,000 members strong—more than twice the number allowed under the Oslo accord. There is also the never-ending incitement to violence, the poisoning of the minds of school children, and the steady anti-Israel invective in Palestinian media. "With blood and fire we shall liberate Jerusalem" is not a slogan that conveys peaceful intentions.

"The policy is still...to advance the struggle and to damage and hopefully to destroy Israel. There can be no peace until that mindset totally changes"

The basic flaw in the process. But the basic flaw in the peace process is the fact that the Arab world has not come to terms with the very existence of Israel. Its presence in the midst of Arabdom is intolerable to the Moslem Arabs, an insult that has to be removed. No "sacrifice for peace" can change that. This mindset includes virtually all Arabs—their leaders and their respective populations.

Mr. Netanyahu's alleged "intransigence" is based on hia unwillingness to give away vital strategic assets to those who are sworn to destroy Israel. And it isn't clear why Israel should yield any territory at all. The whole concept of "land for peace" is a new one in the history of mankind. It had always been clearly understood that, if a country launched an aggressive war and lost it, a price would have to be paid—usually including the loss of territory. Why should things now be reversed and why should Israel, the repeatedly aggressed-against but victorious party, pay a price in territory? And, in any case, if "land for peace" is such a good idea, why, for the sake of such peace, shouldn't the Arabs make some such "sacrifice?"

Our State Department, unfortunately, also seems to have fallen under this spell and keeps exhorting the Israeli government to make ever greater accommodations to the Palestinians. This is the more remarkable since it should be clear that the only consideration that keeps Arab aggression against Israel in check is Israel's strength. Once that strength is diminished, war will follow, and not peace. Israel is America's most important strategic asset in that part of the world. It would be folly to weaken Israel and to make it a strategic liability for America, instead of an asset.

The Oslo peace process never had a very good chance to work because the gap between the two sides was too wide. What Israel could concede without totally compromising its security was not sufficient for the Palestinians. Arafat, having become the victim of his own rhetoric, has promised his people what Israel has always been unable to give, especially surrendering vital strategic assets, endangering its water supply, admitting hundreds of thousands of so- called refugees, and conceding any part of Jerusalem. Much of this could have been overcome if Arafat, in the more than four years since the handshake, would have shown real evidence of a desire for making peace with Israel and if he would have kept his obligations under the Oslo agreement. But that is not the case. The policy is still to break every promise and to violate every provision, as long as it serves to advance the struggle and to damage and hopefully to destroy Israel. There can be no peace until that mindset totally changes. Unfortunately, Oslo or no Oslo, that does not seem to be in the cards for the immediate future.

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izes Being as a unique moment of apotheosis, ecstasy, and epiphany, best expressed in his own distinctively elevated, hieratic, and ceremonially repetitive language. Real human existence could be thought of as almost the exact inverse of Heideggerian *Dasein*; and it is the defense of that unheroic, heterogeneous life, the texture and rhythm of our daily routines and decisions with their myriad of small, unspectacular adjustments offered in the interest of a habitable social world, that is the real answer to Heidegger's fascination with the glamour of daring and authenticity.

Heidegger's Nazism was neither strictly entailed by his philosophy nor merely accidental to it. Instead, the relationship hovers between these poles in a way that can be thought of as a kind of parallelism. Nothing in Heidegger's philosophy was derived from Nazism, and there is much in it that is inimical to Nazi beliefs. But at its core there is also a constellation of assumptions about what is valuable and what is dross in human existence whose similarity to the apocalyptic and messianic strains in Nazism seems incontestable. Heidegger's loathing for modern life made him seek a political solution in a movement whose leadership had no interest in him except as a propagandist on whose prestige they could draw; but he shared with them a contempt for pluralism, diversity, multiplicity, and heterogeneity. For Heidegger, truth, whether it was heeded or not, remained single and uniform. The tripartite Nazi slogan, *Ein Volk, Ein Reich, und Ein Führer*, is simply the vulgar and demagogic manifestation of an analogous urge to subsume the multifariousness of political life into a single mythic unity. Being calls us, for Heidegger, though we have largely lost the will and the capacity to heed it. Yet it calls us with one voice, to one task, in one language (German). It is unthinkable to Heidegger that Being can speak in many accents, including the vernacular of the modern consciousness.

Heidegger disliked Descartes; he saw himself as deconstructing the metaphysical tradition out of which Descartes arose. Yet his own emphasis on the singularity of Being's self-revelation is closer to a Cartesian thirst for certainty than to any essayistic, provisional acceptance of multiplicity. Heidegger envelops the call of Being in a litany of Romantic nature imagery (the forest clearing, the plowed field, the lonely path through the forest) that is at times close to kitsch. Here, for example, is a passage from a famous broadcast lecture of March 1934, "Creative Landscape: Why Do We Stay in the Province?" in which Heidegger explained his reasons for rejecting the offer of a chair in Berlin:

> Recently I got a second invitation to teach at the University of Berlin. On that occasion I left Freiburg and withdrew to the cabin. I listened to what the mountains and the forest and the farmlands were saying, and I went to see an old friend of mine, a 75-year-old farmer. He had read about the call to Berlin in the newspaper. What could he say? Slowly he fixed the sure gaze of his clear eyes on mine, and keeping his mouth tightly shut, he thoughtfully put his faithful hand on my shoulder. Ever so slightly he shook his head. That meant: absolutely no.

With its mixture of provincial pietism and pre-industrial sentimentality, Heidegger's rhetoric blurs the distinctions that might lend his attack on modernity a less compromised resonance. What Musil called "the subjunctive of potentiality," the idea that everything in the world could "just as easily be some other way," is unthinkable in Heidegger's terms. In his philosophy, history, thought, and the self-disclosure of Being all follow a single, unidirectional trajectory. There are no alternatives and no sideshadows.

Heidegger's nostalgia marks him as Europe's last unwavering metaphysician of calamity. And it marks the limit of his spiritual and cultural usefulness. In an interview in 1966, published posthumously in *Der Spiegel*, Heidegger announced that the darkness of modernity and nihilism had spread over the globe so forcefully that now "only a God can save us." Perhaps so, but not a God that Heidegger himself would have recognized or welcomed. •

Phallus in Wonderland

By Richard Jenkyns

Ventures into Childland: Victorians, Fairy Tales, and Femininity by U.C. Knoepflmacher

(University of Chicago Press, 444 pp., $35)

What have the British done better than anyone else? Not opera or sculpture or cookery or tennis. But England has dominated children's literature as completely as the German-speaking peoples have dominated the symphony. Lewis Carroll, of course, is the supreme master, allegedly the most widely quoted and translated author in the Western world after the Bible and Shakespeare; but otherwise the golden age comes a little after, from the late nineteenth century to about 1930. This is the era of Rudyard Kipling and Edith Nesbit, of Beatrix Potter, Kenneth Grahame, and A.A. Milne. It also sees, in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, the best of all boys' books (a slightly different genre), as well as Daisy Ashford's *The Young Visiters*, which remains unique in the literature of the world as the only masterpiece written by a child.

Not everyone will agree—this is an issue likely to excite passionate loyalties—but there is a case for saying that the Alice books, the Beatrix Potter stories, Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows*, and Milne's Pooh books constitute the best of all children's literature produced anywhere. And since that golden age, Roald Dahl may be the only children's writer to have shown a touch of genius. There are plenty of other children's books that are good, and a few that are very good, but these may have been the only writers to have exhibited the extra flair, the uniqueness of originality and vision, that makes a children's book not only good but great.

We were all children once (though in a few cases it is hard to believe); and the literature of childhood is interesting not just on its own merits, but also for what it may tell us about ourselves. As U.C. Knoepflmacher observes in the last sentence of *Ventures into Childland*, there is material in these books "that still shapes our changing assumptions about gender and generation." For this reason, certainly, it is worth asking why children's literature flourished where and when it did.

Oxford, as it happens, has had a peculiarly prominent place in this story, and perhaps we can indeed detect a childlikeness in the Home of Lost Causes that may account for it. It may be a kind of accident that *The Wind in the Willows*, like *Alice in Wonderland*, opens on the Thames close to the city, but we can surely see not only in Carroll

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but also in Tolkien (*The Hobbit* is a children's book, whatever may be thought of *The Lord of the Rings*) and the Narnia books of C.S. Lewis different kinds of donnishness at play. More broadly, we may suspect that in between Wordsworth's discovery that the child's vision has a quality of its own and Freud's intimations of immorality in early childhood lies a space that was especially favorable to this kind of writing. Before, books for children, such as Thomas Day's *Sandford and Merton* (1783-89), were grimly didactic, designed to preach or to frighten them into the semblance of adult behavior as soon as possible; since Freud it has been hard to avoid a crippling self-consciousness.

Knoepflmacher's concern is mostly with the mid-Victorian age, though his study does spread late into the century. He considers seven authors: Ruskin (*The King of the Golden River*, a very early piece), Thackeray (*The Rose and the Ring*), George MacDonald, Carroll, Jean Ingelow, Christina Rossetti (who wrote *Sing-Song*, a book of rhymes for very young children, and *Speaking Likenesses*, a set of three children's stories), and Juliana Horatia Ewing. He leaves out Charles Kingsley's *The Water Babies* altogether, which is a puzzling omission: not only has it been, after the Alice books, the most widely read of mid-Victorian children's stories, but it also had an obvious influence on several of the writers whom Knoepflmacher does discuss. Nor is there a word about Stevenson's *A Child's Garden of Verses*, probably the best known original collection of poems for children in that period, or Heinrich Hoffmann's verses of the German *Struwwelpeter* (1847), which in translation enjoyed an enormous vogue. Notorious for its creepy sadism, and a happy hunting-ground for Freudians, it had one good effect in inspiring Hilaire Belloc's hilarious parodies, the *Cautionary Tales for Children*. There is Jim, for example, who ran away from his nurse on a visit to the zoo:

> He hadn't gone a yard, when—Bang!
> With open Jaws, a Lion sprang,
> And hungrily began to eat
> The Boy: beginning at his feet.
> Now, just imagine how it feels
> When first your toes and then your heels,
> And then by gradual degrees,
> Your shins and ankles, calves and knees,
> Are slowly eaten, bit by bit.
> No wonder Jim detested it!

Most of the works discussed by Knoepflmacher are now very obscure, and it is at the least interesting to have them dragged back into the light. Some people still read *The Rose and the Ring*, though as a spoof of fairy stories it is not really a children's book; perhaps it is a "young person's book," as it was begun to amuse two teenage girls. George MacDonald's fantasies for adults, *Lilith* and *Phantastes*, which fall outside Knoepflmacher's purview, still have their devotees. The best known of his children's books, *At the Back of the North Wind*, is probably more honored than read; it is an intriguing blend of the supernatural with the harsh economic and social realities of a Dickensian London—but then Dickens's London, we might reflect, is itself half a mythic place.

Indeed, we might regard the book as an *Oliver Twist* carried a couple of stages further into fantasy, with a tinge of religious and mystical color added. What it lacks is any first-rate character, and the very best children's books, however fantastical, always seem to have such characters, in the sense that we find them in naturalistic novels, vivid, individual, and, however grotesque, with some element of reality at their base: Humpty Dumpty and the White Knight, Mr. Toad, Jemima Puddleduck and Mr. Jackson, Eeyore and Pooh. But in North Wind herself MacDonald did create a goddess of authentic numinous power, beneficent and destructive, sinking ships and drowning those aboard. Odd though it seems, perhaps the children's writer who comes nearest to this sense of the dark side of life is Beatrix Potter, who despite the dimity curtains, poke bonnets, and brass-buttoned blue jackets of her apparent idyll does not forget that her pretty animals are preying upon one another, eating and being eaten.

Some of those most eminent in writing for adults fail when they try to write for the young. The best thing about Ruskin's *The King of the Golden River* is its title; it is a sort of gutless Grimms' fairy-tale, with a milksop for a hero, bloodless and asexual. (As Knoepflmacher points out, it has no female characters at all.) Rossetti's stories, too, are a disappointment, arch and labored. The notable discovery is Ewing. She herself, in an introduction to her *Old Fashioned Fairy Tales*, wrote very intelligently about the nature of such *Märchen*, noting the recurrence of archetypal story-patterns and stressing that the narrative should be swift and simple, without descriptive or discursive writing. She does have a didactic vein (which is fair enough, for children like grown-ups to remember that they are grown-ups when they address them), but she does not let it spoil the story.

Like the best writers in this genre, Ewing can be child and adult at once:

God is a dangerous idea—whether animistic or vitalistic, theistic or deistic—perverting justice in ethics and politics. Of ancient philosophies Epicureanism alone disposed of this problem with coherent doctrines about chance/necessary interaction of atoms, about evolutionary development, and about basic biological drives. The historical Jesus agreed more with this than with Judaism—more atheist/realist than theist/idealist—as indicated by a recently unearthed document that claims to be enigmatic *ipsissima verba* of Jesus noted by an evidently puzzled student who wandered with him. Jack Hannah corroborates this claim with other independent ancient documents. All pertinent texts and commentary are provided.

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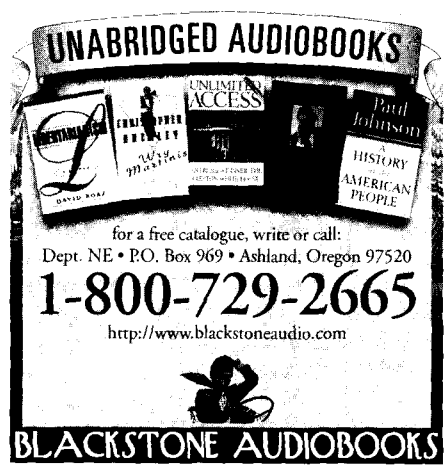

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> Benjy was a bad boy. His name was Benjamin, but he was always called Benjy. He looked like something ending in jy or gy, or rather dgy, such as *podgy*. Indeed he was podgy, and moreover smudgy, having that cloudy, slovenly look (like a slate *smudged* instead of washed) which is characteristic of people whose morning toilet is not so thorough as it should be.

Here the linguist pays a visit to the nursery. The passage is playful, but it also recalls nothing less than Hopkins's investigations into the expressiveness of verbal sound.

Knoepflmacher's main argument is that most of the male authors in his survey are in one way or another engaging with the feminine side of themselves (or of their childhood selves). They display a "regressive hostility to growth," they "resist the gender division that comes with sexual maturation," they express "intense desire for an evanescent female self" or "retard the maturation" of their characters. The women writers, by contrast, create "counter-texts" that oppose these "male-authored constructs."

This would be an interesting thesis, if true; but there does not seem to be anything in it. Perhaps that is just as well. One of the most curious things about *Ventures into Childland* is that it apparently never occurs to Knoepflmacher that if he were right, the works of his male authors would surely be bad books—immature, false, and mean-spirited. Ingelow would be a giant and Carroll would be a footnote.

The story-pattern that Carroll established involves a "real" child or children being carried into an imaginary world (and usually returning from it at the end). This is the pattern that we find in *The Water Babies*, published two years before *Alice in Wonderland*, in Kipling's *Puck of Pook's Hill*, in *The Wizard of Oz*, *Peter Pan*, and Lewis's Narnia books, and more recently in Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are*. Jean Ingelow, the first of Knoepflmacher's women writers, adopted this model in *Mopsa the Fairy* (1869), which has usually been taken as following, competently if tamely, in Carroll's footsteps. Knoepflmacher claims instead that she is putting up an unnoticed resistance to Carroll, but he produces nothing that can be called evidence in support of this. It is indeed a claim that lacks historical sense and critical judgement. We should have to suppose that Ingelow, a Freudian *avant la lettre*, supposed herself to have detected a hostility to female maturation in Carroll (very unlikely), and also that she was a writer of Jamesian subtlety.

When Knoepflmacher gets to Christina Rossetti's stories (which she herself described as a "Christmas trifle, would-be in the *Alice* style"), his argument is even odder. Rossetti, he suggests, strongly disliked the cruelty and the violence that she supposedly found in the Alice books, and therefore chose to "deploy sadism" and to exaggerate these characteristics in her own tales. In other words, disliking harshness in a book for children, she decided to put still more of it in a book for children. Here Knoepflmacher has simply not stopped to think.

His book is indeed riddled with absurdities. Some of these are plain ignorant. Thus Knoepflmacher suggests that the nonsense word "mome" in Carroll's *Jabberwocky* poem suggests maternity through a play on the word "mom." Is this professor of Victorian literature really unaware that "mom" is an Americanism, unknown on the other side of the Atlantic? He also applauds another scholar's proposal that Charles Dodgson chose the pseudonym Lewis Carroll to insinuate a "surreptitious femininity," since Carroll or Carol is often a female name. But Carol was not in currency as a female name at this date, and Carroll or Carol, if found at all, would naturally have been taken as a male name. (As is well known, Dodgson took his two given names, Charles Lutwidge, Latinized them as Carolus Ludovicus, and then turned them round and put them back into English to make the name by which we know him.) Knoepflmacher also thinks it worth recording this same scholar's speculation that the pseudonym was chosen because L.C. suggests Lacie, an anagram for Alice found in *Wonderland*, even though Dodgson had probably not even met Alice Liddell, who was in any case only four when he did first meet her! The White Queen, who could believe as many as six impossible things before breakfast, would have glowed with fellow feeling.

In *Through the Looking-Glass* Alice forgets her own name, except that it begins with an L. This is presumably an allusion to the real Alice's surname, Liddell, with perhaps a glance at the L in her first name. That is not enough for Knoepflmacher. L indicates God (the Hebrew *Elohim*), and Wordsworth's Lucy, and "the She who is 'Elle,'" and Tweedledum and Tweedledee (who each have an L in their name), and wood and tree (since timber is *lignum* in Latin). Alice herself, by the way, also represents not only Dodgson's dream-child, but also Dodgson himself and Jesus Christ (I am not making this up: "the similarity ... seems inescapable").

Alice is also—versatile girl—a sort of sex kitten, who titillates the male member with talk of love bites. You may not be surprised to hear that Knoepflmacher is one of those professors who sees the phallus everywhere—in heads, hats, swords, pencils, cats' tails, women (yes, the "phallic mother"). Richard Doyle draws Thackeray reading to a sick child, and depicts the dome of St. Peter's through the window to show that the scene is set in Rome; and Knoepflmacher sees it as an erection. At least this sort of thing has a quaint old-fashionedness, though some of us supposed that it had been laughed out of court years ago.

The trouble with Knoepflmacher's approach is that everything becomes like everything else. *The Rose and the Ring* is a wild burlesque of fairy romance, not the thing itself. Actually, Knoepflmacher knows this perfectly well, but he chooses to ignore it, and treats the story, as he treats the works of Ruskin, MacDonald, and Carroll, as an exploration of private angst. This is like reading Laurel and Hardy's *A Chump at Oxford* as though it were *Brideshead Revisited*.

Knoepflmacher's male authors are self-obsessed, wrapped up in personal therapy. He assures us that Thackeray, in *The Rose and the Ring*, represents himself in Giglio, Valoroso, the Fairy Blackstick, and the Countess Gruffanuff and her husband. This is the easier to show because Knoepflmacher is fond of the "heads I win, tails you lose" style of argument: since Giglio is a great success at university, he stands, by inversion, for his creator, who was a Cambridge dropout. In the Alice books, similarly, Carroll portrays himself in Alice herself, the White Rabbit, the Mouse, the Dormouse, the Mock Turtle, the Dodo, the Mad Hatter, the March Hare, the Frog Footman, the Cheshire Cat, Humpty Dumpty, and the Knave of Hearts.

Another oddity of *Ventures into Childland* is that it leaves out the children themselves. Knoepflmacher quite forgets the people for whom these books are meant. Yet good children's books are not turned obsessively inward; they look outward, with a generosity of giving. They are affectionate toward their audience, and they reach for an understanding of the childish mind. It is surely no accident that so many of the best such stories originated as entertainments for a real individual child, often with no thought of publication to begin with.

If Alice Liddell had not importuned Mr. Dodgson to write down the story that he had told on what ranks (with Shelley's last journey) as the most momentous boat trip in literary history, we should have no *Alice in Wonderland* or *Through the Looking-Glass*. Grahame began *The Wind in the Willows* for his

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own son. Kipling wrote *The Just-So Stories* to amuse his two children (who became the Dan and Una of *Puck of Pook's Hill* and *Rewards and Fairies*). Christopher Robin Milne was embarrassed to have the private lives of his toys exposed to millions.

It may be significant, too, that some of the best children's authors have lost the knack after a while. After Alice, Carroll turned to the dreadful sentimentalities of *Sylvie and Bruno*; Beatrix Potter's later works are so deeply forgotten that few people realize they exist; Grahame and Milne were wise enough not to try to repeat their success. Children's literature flourishes on spontaneity, when the writer can for a while forget his adult being and recover his child's perception of the world. And like the centipede which tried to remember how it walked, the more self-conscious he becomes, the likelier he is to stumble.

True, even good writers have moments when they talk over the children to the grown-ups in the background: recall the vision of the god Pan in *The Wind in the Willows* or the approach of boarding school and the loss of childhood obliquely indicated at the end of *The House at Pooh Corner*. I liked these passages better in boyhood than I do now: in those days they exuded a woozy mystery, all the better for resisting explication. At all events, such passages succeed—if they do succeed—by appealing at the level of the child as well as the level of the adult.

Carroll's supremacy is owed in part to the remarkable fact that in him the adult and the child are one. The plays with the nature of language that have made him a favorite with philosophers are the very same puzzles that tease and amuse small boys and girls. Knoepflmacher notices that one passage in Alice's encounter with the White Knight has a different tone from the rest:

> Years afterwards she could bring the whole scene back again, as if it had been only yesterday—the mild blue eyes and kindly smile of the Knight—the setting sun gleaming through his hair, and shining on his armour in a blaze of light that quite dazzled her—the horse moving quietly about, with the reins hanging loose on his neck, cropping the grass at her feet—and the black shadows of the forest behind—all this she took in like a picture, as, with one hand shading her eyes, she leant against a tree, watching the strange pair, and listening, in a half-dream, to the melancholy music of the song.

What he does not appear to recognize is that this strikes an utterly false note. Alice has ceased to be herself; she is no longer thinking her own thoughts, she is being made to feel the way the author would like her to feel. She has indeed become a part of someone else's dream. It is, happily, a rare lapse.

Knoepflmacher is by no means alone in thinking that Alice represents either the author himself or the author's dream-child. Still, both ideas seem inept. Carroll's triumph is to have created one of the most living, self-subsistent heroines in fiction: she is very like a child and very like a girl, and not at all like a don or a doll. This is perhaps a case where biographical knowledge can be a positive hindrance. For whatever may be thought about Dodgson's psychology (and it resists easy analysis), no children's literature is less pedophilic than the two Alice books. The pedophile wants to imagine the child as she is not, but Carroll presents the child as she is.

The psychological undercurrents that swirl through Carroll's books are those of a child's dream; the creatures that Alice meets do feel like transmogrified versions of puzzling, bossy, unpredictable grown-ups. But it would be wise not to press this too far. George MacDonald's *At the Back of the North Wind* includes a gentleman who writes for children: "I do not know how much of Mr. Raymond's story the smaller children understood; indeed, I don't quite know how much there was in it to be understood, for in such a story everyone just has to take what he can get." MacDonald appreciates that mythic power is not like allegory, and we should allow Carroll at least as much indeterminacy. After all, we do not understand our own dreams, and he imitates nature in making Alice's dreams richly but elusively suggestive.

Knoepflmacher is right to insist that we should take children's books seriously as a form of literary art. Effectively, though, he disobeys his own injunction, for his way of taking such works seriously is to turn them into works for adults. The truth is rather that the nineteenth century, which discovered the otherness of the child, discovered also the otherness of children's literature. Besides, to take it seriously is not necessarily to take it solemnly; but Knoepflmacher leaves humor out of the picture. It is worth remembering that all the greatest works of children's literature are comic masterpieces, whatever else they may be as well. But the Alice books, on his account, are grim affairs, seething with "sentimentality and anger," haunted by madness, saturated in "the omnipresence of death." Should we really be feeding such stuff to the little ones? "Ah, well!" said Humpty Dumpty, "they may write such things in a *book*."

RICHARD JENKYNS is a fellow of Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford.

TRB *continued from page 6*

form of cruise missiles—and that's easier for him to defend against. Milosevic also knows he can dissuade Clinton from an all-out bombing campaign by placing his military assets as close as possible to civilian targets. The net effect is to make our threats that much less credible, and hence that much less effective as diplomatic tools.

Finally, avoiding military action to prevent casualties in the short term can mean incurring more casualties in the long term. Yes, Bush's decision spared American sons and daughters at that particular moment in February 1991, but it also left Saddam in power—which meant that, only weeks later, he could slaughter thousands of Kurds and Shiites within his own borders. It also meant that the United States was obliged to maintain an indefinite military presence in the Persian Gulf to keep Saddam bottled up. Dozens of soldiers have since died in Saudi Arabia at the hands of terrorists. Yet, to David Frost, Bush insisted that "instead of doing the Lord's work, we would have been doing something very, very bad" if we had gone to Baghdad to oust Saddam.

A similar point could be made about the Clinton administration's cruise missile strikes on Sudan and Afghanistan, which damaged, but failed to destroy, Osama Bin Ladin's military capability. At a minimum, the president's fixation on the need to spare civilian bystanders appears to have created avoidable diplomatic and political complications. Evidence linked other plants in the Sudan to chemical-weapons production more clearly, but Clinton rejected them as targets because they were too close to civilian areas. Meanwhile, evidence has emerged casting even more doubt that the target Clinton chose was the right target. And one key piece of circumstantial evidence in that regard is precisely the attribute that convinced Clinton to strike—no one works there at night. For, if the plant really was producing illegal gas as well as medicines, wouldn't the gas-making go on under cover of darkness?

I don't mean to be callous or indifferent. Even a single combat death represents a vast toll on both the victim and his or her family. But the American military is an instrument of American policy. Its performance must be measured in terms of national interests secured—which is not necessarily the same thing as lives saved. The impulse to eliminate casualties from war is a worthy one, but, like all worthy sentiments, it can be taken too far.

CHARLES LANE

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

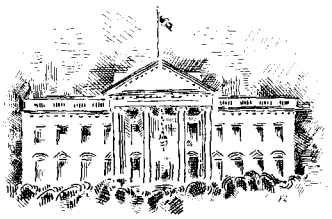
Candid camera

IS IT POSSIBLE TO INVADE YOUR own privacy? Or is privacy, by definition, a matter of protection from others—from uninvited stares, unwanted prying? What if you are willing to subject the intimacies and banalities of your everyday life to the gaze of strangers because you fear that the unexamined life—unexamined by others, that is—is not worth living? Are you making a choice? Yes, but not under conditions of your own making. "In the century of necessary visibility," writes Leo Braudy in *The Frenzy of Renown: Fame and its History*, we are all "hostages of the eye," and "no aspiration is exempt from the general definition of what aspiration means." When celebrity is a kind of secular religion, it becomes harder and harder to imagine a meaningful life that is not somehow touched by its redeeming light, its winking promise of eternity.

HERE, FOR EXAMPLE, IS WHAT some people will now do in order to be noticed: They will install cameras in their living rooms, bedrooms, and work spaces—cameras that snap pictures, 24 hours a day and as often as every 30 seconds, and transmit those pictures live to the Web, where you or I or anybody else can consume them in our own living rooms or bedrooms or work spaces. The most publicized of these personal webcams—the one you are most likely to have heard of, or even seen—belongs to a woman named Jennifer Ringley, who is now 22 years old and has been living in her self-imposed Panopticon for two years. Log on to JenniCam—which has become so popular that Ringley now charges a subscription fee—and you are likely to find the sallow, redheaded, slightly zaftig Web designer staring glassy-eyed at her computer screen. But you may also see her fooling around with her boyfriend, or masturbating, or sleeping, maybe with a breast or thigh carelessly or not so carelessly exposed. For better viewing, Jenni will sometimes leave the lights on while she is asleep.

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT, when I read about Ringley in a flurry of recent press accounts, I assumed she was an anomaly, an exotic cybercritter working the outer edges of self-exposure. And I figured that, for viewers, the overwhelming attraction of these sites was that actual women could sometimes be seen naked on them. As it turns out, I was wrong on the first count and nearly wrong on the second. The Webcam Resource (*www.webcamresource.com*) lists about 100 such personal webcams—and this is exclusive of "adult" sites. Other sources say the number is closer to 300 or 400; it's hard to pin down a figure since many of these sites come and go.

THEY INCLUDE THE SELF-STYLINGS of young performance artists manqué like Jenni and of various Network Administrators, Quality Assurance Engineers, and other alienated compu-toilers with a little too much time on their hands. But they also include a surprising number of people who are neither hipsters nor professional techies and who are more likely to be seen walking the treadmill while watching TV or reclining in their Barca-Loungers, alone, than, say, cavorting in thong underwear. These Internet exhibitionists are not so much exposing their bodies as they are packaging their lives. There is an airline mechanic from New Jersey who lives in a split-level house with his wife and two children and who observes that, while "New Jersey is often portrayed badly," his "part of the state is lovely." There is a couple who broadcast pictures of their sleeping infant ("Deanna's Live BabyCam") so that family and friends (and anybody else) can inspect her. There is a 24-year-old named Amanda who does in fact oblige viewers by prancing around her living room naked, but who also subjects them to diary musings such as: "That darn Pacific Coast Highway is still a mess.... But all ended well because I ended up at the Camarillo Outlet Mall where I found a pretty sweater that I bought." There is an aircraft electrician named Ben Tolbert who lives in Clinton Township, Michigan, with his 15-year-old son and who transmits a lot of pictures of his lawnmower and his backyard grill. "Perhaps," he says sweetly in a message to his viewers, "you would like to see me prepare your favorite recipe, do the laundry, wash windows, or exercise for an hour." Perhaps. I wouldn't have thought so until I came across the webcam of a library studies professor—a bearded fellow who reveals little or no flesh and whose teasers include "Let's look at Don's Office!" and "Don lives in Mankato, Minnesota. Take a look at what the town is really like!!" Don claims to have gotten 94,095 visitors to his site—who's to say "BennyCam" couldn't match him?



IT WOULD BE TEMPTING TO IGnore the abundant paraphernalia of narcissism that accompanies many of these sites—the "All About Me" pages; the not atypical declaration of one Cindy in Bellevue, Washington, that, while she will not countenance "a lot of goofy e-mails" requesting that she do something particular on camera, she will "of course" accept gifts. (Indeed, Cindy directs viewers to her wish list of CDs—"about the only thing I keep current.") Or the fact that many of the webcammers decline, often with a divaish hissiness, to chat with their viewers (pretty Lorraine, a software tester living in San Francisco, transmits a constant stream of pictures of herself sitting in her work station or hanging out in her apartment but says that "as you may expect, I am a VERY busy person.... Sending me 7–8 messages in a row is not going to elicit a response from me"). Ignoring all that, you could concentrate on the fact that a lot of us are lonely and that, for some people, anyway, webcams might be a way of seeking a new kind of community in the very technology that is making us more and more monadic.

BUT I HAVE TO SAY THAT WITH A few exceptions (like Ben, the single father, who seems to be trying hard to keep his son's life with him fun) that is not what struck me about the world of webcams. What struck me is how they seemed to mimic in miniature the larger world of celebrity, with its fans and hangers-on, and its stars asserting, in language that might be poignant if it weren't so ridiculous, that they do not exist solely for our delectation, that they are owed autonomy from the gaze they have so avidly sought. "Ana is a human being," writes Ana Voog of AnaCam, "who is an artist. As she is a human being she is not obligated to be home for any particular hours or at any particular times of day.... She is sharing with you what she chooses in the manner it evolves. Sometimes this might be boring." How sad to have to apologize to strangers for the boring bits of your life! And I kept remembering what Ringley once told a journalist from Reuters: "Without the camera," she said, "I probably would have always been a nobody." How deluded we are to think the camera bestows being.

MARGARET TALBOT

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Let me ask you something... Should "Driving While Black" be a crime?

This is not a trick question. On highways all over this country, cars are being stopped by the police solely because of the driver's skin color. Dark skin color by itself is a cause for suspicion.

On I-95 if you're black and driving a nice car, you fit a so-called "drug courier profile." In one ACLU lawsuit challenging this practice, we found that of the millions of people who travel I-95, only 20 per cent are black. Yet, according to police statistics, about 70 per cent of those pulled over and searched are black. All over the country thousands of innocent people - including Members of Congress, prominent athletes and actors, lawyers, police officers, business leaders and their families - have been hauled out of their cars and subjected to humiliating roadside searches by police and drug-sniffing dogs. Some have been handcuffed and manhandled before being let go.

Thirty-five years ago, people were being lynched in this country because of the color of their skin. Obviously, legal and moral progress has been made since then. But is it enough?

Think about it.

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